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Critical Perspectives of Grammatical Agreement in English Syntax

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Abstract: Subject-verb agreement is a very complex and important domain of English syntax. There are three types of number agreement: formal agreement, notional or semantic agreement and proximity agreement. Semantic override and number transparency are two important concepts in the field of agreement in English. There are various types of agreement in English. They include subject-verb agreement, aspectual agreement, pronoun agreement, concord with nominal adjectives, etc.

Key Words: concord, formal concord, semantic concord, proximity concord, semantic, override, number transparency, coordination

Introduction: In English syntax, the term *concord* or *agreement* is of wider significance. *Concord* plays a crucial role in the making of grammatically correct sentences in English. A good knowledge of concord is essential for writing grammatically correct sentences in English. Undoubtedly, concord is a very complicated domain of English grammar. The learners must acquire the correct rules for concord and this would enhance her/his ability to write grammatically correct sentences in English.

Research Methodology: It is a document-based qualitative research. The various documents, texts, books, reference books are used for data collection. The research method used is document or content analysis.

Definition of concord: *Grammatical concord* means that certain grammatical elements agree with each other. This is why concord is also known as agreement. According to Chalker et al, *concord* or *agreement* refers to a morphosyntactic phenomenon whereby two or more elements in a clause or sentence are harmonized in terms of the shape they take e.g. with regard to person, number or gender. In English we find different kinds of concord or agreement. They are number agreement, pronoun agreement, agreement with demonstratives, agreement with relative, interrogative and indefinite pronouns, verb agreement with collective nouns, bipartites and summation plurals, agreement with proper nouns and proper names, agreement with open-class quantifiers and other numerical phrases and agreement with coordinated and complex subjects.

Three Principles of Number Agreement: There are three different principles of number agreement: *formal*, *notional* and *proximity*. According to Peters (2004), the principles of agreement can be seen in the selection of congruent word forms as in *That flower has had its day ;Those flowers have had their day*. This conventional matching of nouns, demonstratives, personal pronouns/determiners and verbs to mark them (wherever possible) as either singular or plural, as inanimate (=neuter) rather than animate and as third person reference is known as formal agreement. **Formal agreement** is regarded as the default type of agreement where the visible form of the subject agrees with the verb. Plural nouns take plural agreement and singular nouns take singular agreement: *The man was going to the market. The men are going to the market. This man is tall but those men are short. I go there. You go there. He goes there*. Formal agreement is found between the subject

noun or noun phrase and the verb, between the demonstrative determiner and the noun pre-modified by it, between the subject pronoun and the verb. **Notional/semantic agreement** overrides the actual/visible form of the noun and follows the meaning of the noun. In other words, the sense/meaning of the noun is to be matched in the verb. This is **obligatory** in few situations and is **optional** in many other situations: *The police were/*was ready to tackle any disorder*(obligatory). *The police are also looking for a second car. Police say they have arrested twenty people following the disturbance. The news was/*were very shocking*(obligatory). *The clergy have/has to take necessary steps* (optional but semantic change). *The printers is /are on the right side* (optional but semantic change: *printers* is treated as a singular noun when it refers to the premises of a particular business). It is to be noted here that the use of singular agreement is said to underline the unity of the group (*the clergy, the committee, etc.*) and the -s of *printers* is a collective suffix and not a plural suffix (Examples: *barracks, diggings, drycleaners, gasworks, headquarters, premises, printers and stables*—these words denote an agglomeration of structures united by a common function). In *King prawns*(plural) *cooked in chilli salt and pepper was* (singular)*very much better*, the singular verb is chosen to agree with the dish being referred to rather than individual prawns specified in the noun phrase in the subject position. This is an example of notional concord.

Huddleston and Pullum (2002) have introduced two very important concepts to explain notional agreement: **semantic override** and **number transparency**. **Semantic override** refers to “the way in which semantic notions associated with the head noun of the subject NP may override the syntactic rules of agreement” (Peters, page 314): *The gasworks is on the right side* (the noun which is plural in form is overridden in the number of the finite verb). *Our government have rescued the people* (the noun which is singular in form is overridden in the number of the finite verb). **Semantic override** can be optional or obligatory. **Number transparency** is said to “explain the inherent indeterminacy of complex determiners such as *a lot, lots of*; and non-numerical quantifiers such as *couple of, number of, rest of, heaps of*.” [Peters, page 236]. In this case, number agreement depends on the complement of the complex determiners and non-numerical quantifiers: *A lot of bread is placed on the table* (here *bread* is the complement which is singular), *A lot of loaves are lying around* (here *loaves* is the complement which is plural), *The rest of the cake was eaten* (here *the cake* is the complement), *The rest of the cakes were eaten* (here *the cakes* is the complement), *There was heaps of laughter* (here *laughter* is the complement), *There were heaps of laughs* (here *laughs* is the complement).

Proximity agreement /Attraction through proximity refers to “the agreement of a verb with a closely preceding noun, instead of with the noun head that actually functions as subject of the sentence in question.” (Chalker et al) Proximity agreement is agreement with the number of the nearest noun and underscores either formal or notional agreement (Peters). This agreement is acceptable especially when the subject is long or complex or long and complex. Here the form of the verb reflects the number of the immediately preceding noun: *Neither of the latest books are appealing* (here the plurality of the immediately preceding plural noun ‘books’ works in combination with the notional plural agreement as evident from the plural verb ‘are’—both films are embraced in the writer’s thinking/the writer thinks of both films at the same time), *Bird songs and the sound of a waterfall makes it a magical place* (here the second noun phrase ‘sound of a waterfall’ --instead of ‘waterfall’--is detailed and this detailing tends to heighten its sense and thus, due to this detailing, the second noun phrase tends to be segregated psychologically, but its sense tends to be reduced, being jointly coordinated with ‘and’. The singular verb is used to enhance its sense. In other words, the writer is thinking of ‘the sound of a waterfall’ and this appeals to him much more than bird songs. The sound of a waterfall is the focal point.)

According to the principle of proximity, concord is determined by whatever in the subject position immediately precedes the verb. In cases of inversion and an adverbial quasi-subject, we find singular concord in spite of plural subject noun phrases: *Here’s John and Mary*; *Where’s the scissors?*; *There’s several bags missing*. We also find, in colloquial speech, the following somewhat ungrammatical examples: *Is the scissors on the table?* *Has my glasses (spectacles) been found?* In these instances, we find the operation of two factors: the influence of the subject on number is somewhat reduced because the verb precedes the subject, and the summation plurals are notionally singular but morphologically and syntactically plural. But in other cases not involving inversion, we find completely grammatical sentences: *My glasses have been found* (Correct)* *My glasses has been found* (Incorrect).

In **proximity concord**, we find that sometimes the verb in a clause agrees with the noun closer to the verb typically in a postmodifier but which is not the head of the noun phrase in the subject position. This is due to the psycholinguistic constraints of a limited short term memory and the pressure of online construction of linguistic output. With subject-verb inversion, the verb agrees with the first of coordinated phrases:

- One of the leaves(PL) start to become red. [here *one* is the head]
- One of the girls(PL) have done the work.
- Not one of the people(PL) were up to par.
- Among the Toads was(SG) an alcoholic actor called Richard Deane(first noun phrase), an engineer, an international lawyer, a tax advisor, and an Indian lady called Amrita.[inversion]

According to Prof Biber, the proximity principle may operate with notional concord. Plural concord is found with quantifying expressions with *of* plus a plural noun, and with species nouns: *kind of*, *form of*, *type of*. Here we find plural concord partly because of proximity and partly because of the fact that expressions with species nouns behave like determiners :

- A bunch of men were talking in loud voices. [plural]
- A number of African countries have condemned the UN resolution. [plural]
- A group of boys were having their school lunch. [plural]
- A series of profit down gradings were shrugged off. [plural]
- All kind of people were waiting at the station.
- It remains to be seen what precise form of words are agreed by the 12 heads of government.

Proximity concord is found in expressions with *as well as* :

- The general's capacity to guide the force, as well as the power of his purse [SG] is known to them.
- An old man as well as many women [PL] were present there.

Different Types of Concord/Agreement: In English we find different types of grammatical concord or agreement:

Subject-verb Concord: It means that in finite clauses/sentences the subject noun or noun phrase must agree with the verb (finite verb) in person (first, second and third) and number (singular and plural). "Except for the verb *be*, subject-verb concord is limited to the present tense, and to the choice between the base form (e.g. *walk*) and the *s*-form (e.g. *walks*) of the finite verb. There is no subject-verb concord with modal auxiliaries, non-finite verbs, imperatives, or the subjunctive: these do not vary for number or person." (Biber et al) Frankly speaking, concord patterns in English are very complicated due to the variable nature of the subject noun/noun phrase. A variety of concord patterns are as follows.

Concord with plural nouns without -s ending as the subject: In English, there are plural nouns without -s ending. When the plural form of a count noun is not distinct from its singular, it is called *zero plural*. They include some animal nouns (e.g. *bison, carp, neat, cod, fish, pike, squid, sheep, deer, salmon, trout*), some quantifying nouns, when used as part of a numerical quantity (e.g. *dozen, foot, hundred, lakh/lac, million, billion, trillion, zillion, mile*) and some other nouns (e.g. *aircraft, dice, series, species*). The other nouns having both zero plurals and regular plurals are *fish/fishes, pheasant/pheasants, buffalo/buffalos, and shrimp/shrimps*:

- The sheep has been infected.
- The dark-wooled sheep were grazing in the grassy field.
- We operate a fleet of six aircraft.
- The aircraft was flown by a young American pilot.
- At least three military aircraft were destroyed.
- The series was based on a successful cricketer.
- The faunal and stratigraphic series have the same order[we can roll/throw/shake the pair of dice.]
- Three dozen red roses [The zero plural is also regularly used for *dozen, hundred, thousand, million* preceded by numerals }

- Half a dozen bottles of milk
- A half-dozen bottles of milk
- Several dozen people/a few dozen people
- They arrived in dozens.
- We interviewed dozens and dozens of people.
- The total cost of the project is around 50 lakh rupees.[one *lakh* people; *lakhs* of people, 40 *lakh* rupees, *lakhs* of rupees , 40 lakhs of the rupees. In Indian English, the word *lakh* is used both as an attributive and non-attributive noun with either an unmarked or marked ("-s") plural, respectively. When used attributively, the word has no s-ending.]
- 100 lakh[sg] is called one crore
- Each pile contains a lakh -- a hundred thousand -- gold mohurs or the equivalent of ingots.[ten lakh]
- Various Indian state governments have already announced over 1 lakh crore rupees (\$12.5 billion)-worth of welfare schemes and subsidies
- The merged entity will have deposits of Rs14.6 lakh crore, which is twice that of the UBI.
- His wife estimated that their losses exceeded Rs 30 lakh.
- A few million[sg] doesn't [sg]buy you what it used to.[we use a/one, two, four, few, several, etc. million without a final s on million. Millions (of) can be used if there is no number or quantity before it: *40 millions of people /40 million people. We always a plural verb with million/millions except when an amount of money is mentioned: Five million were affected. Five million people were affected. Five million was withdrawn. Five million pounds was withdrawn. This is also applicable to thousand ,billion, trillion and zillion.]
- There were just a hundred of them there.
- This vase is worth several hundred dollars.
- Hundreds of thousands of people are at risk.
- Four hundred (people) are expected to attend. •
- Two hundred (pounds) was withdrawn from the account.
- Four thousand (people) are expected to attend.
- Two thousand (pounds) was withdrawn from the account.
- tens of millions of dollars
- There were millions of people there.
- I still have a million things to do.
- She got eight million dollars for appearing in that film.
- Worldwide sales reached 2.5 billion.
- Two billion (people) worldwide are expected to watch the game.
- Two billion (dollars) was withdrawn from the account.
- There was a bunch of kids waiting and zillions of reporters.
- A/one thousand pounds
- The journey took one hundred days.
- Thousands of people gathered at the meeting.
- About five thousand people /about fives of thousands of people (*about five thousands of people) gathered at the meeting.
- The Government created four lakh jobs.
- Lakhs of birds were seen in the blue sky.
- Currently, income up to Rs 2.5 lakh is exempt from personal income tax.
- Similarly, principal and MS will have the authority to make local purchase of medicines of five lakh and two lakh rupees respectively.
- About five lakh people (* five lakhs of people) gathered at the fair.
- Private airlines owe a total of Rs 14,574 crore to state-run banks.
- Over a hundred species of insect are found in this area.
- Nearly 850 species of birds have been identified within the country's borders.
- The plant was listed in 1990 as a threatened species.

Concord with species nouns: Collective nouns, unit nouns, quantifying nouns and species nouns are called package nouns as they are said to have a function of packaging together a range of entities. Species nouns include *class, type, kind, sort, species, class, variety, and make*. They “are used to refer not to the amount but to the type of entity or mass expressed by a following *of*-phrase...Species nouns can combine with countable as well as uncountable nouns. With countable nouns there tends to be agreement in number between the species noun and the following noun (e.g. *that kind of thing* v. *all kinds of things*). But we also find singular species nouns combining with a following plural noun and plural species nouns combining with a following singular noun” (Biber et al). Other nouns behaving like these species nouns are form, variety, category, breed, cultivar, brand, make, species and genre (BUT not *model*) :

- Imprisonment is a form of punishment.
- Body language is a potent form of non-verbal communication.
- Bicycles are a cheap and efficient form of transport.
- She has a mild form of the flu .
- This variety of rose is especially hardy and drought-resistant.
- She has 12 varieties of old-fashioned roses.
- The French make many varieties of cheese.
- This is a new variety of apple.
- There are three categories of accommodation - standard, executive, and deluxe.
- There are three categories of hotel room - standard, executive, and deluxe.
- a higher category of prison
- Insurance companies identify six main categories of driver.
- a breed of dog/cat/horse/sheep/cattle
- What's your favourite breed of dog/dog breed?
- A local cultivar of banana was planted.
- What brand of detergent do you use?
- all leading brands of whiskies.
- an unorthodox brand of humour
- What make is your laptop?
- a rare species of beetle
- There are many species of dog(s).
- Over a hundred species of insect are found in this area.
- Poetry is a genre of literature.
- a working model (= one in which the parts move) of a fire engine.
- a working model (=one with parts which move) of a steam engine

Pattern 1: Singular Species noun + of + singular count noun without article//uncountable noun (also Noun +of + species noun):

- Bungalows are a type (SG)of house (SG)(* a type of a house)
- What type (SG) of car (SG) do you drive?
- I think the same type(SG) of thing(SG) could happen here.
- I love this type(SG) of book(SG).
- What do you charge for this type(SG) of work(SG)?
- What do you charge for work of this type?
- It is the first car of its type to have this design feature.
- A country inn of a type that has all but vanished.
- Behaviour of that type was firmly dealt with.
- It is more efficient than most gadgets of its type.
- The civil service had several advantages for a study of this type.
- Differences of this kind.
- A Ford is a make of car/ Any make of machine
- A lion is a species of mammal.
- A Japanese make of car (* a make of Japanese car)

- A strange kind of mammal (* a strange kind of a mammal)

Pattern 2 : Singular species noun + Plural noun:

- I don't know what kind (SG) of dinosaurs (PL) they all are.
- What sort (SG) of things (PL) are effects?
- What type(SG) of clothes(PL) does she wear ?

Pattern 3: plural species noun + singular countable noun/uncountable noun (UN):

- He grew up listening to different types (PL) of music (UN)
- Certain types (PL) of car (SG)
- Over a hundred species (PL) of insect (SG) are found in this area
- There are various types (PL) of the disease (SG)
- I want cars (PL) of that sort (SG)/cars like that.
- There are three main types (PL) of contract (SG) [concord depending on the number of the species noun]
- There are many different types(pl) of bread(sg).
- There are three kinds(pl) of question(sg)
- There are many different strains of this bacterium.

Pattern 4: Plural species noun + Plural nouns:

- She mixes with all types (PL) of people (PL).
- There are three main types (PL) of contracts (PL)
- These kinds (PL) of questions (PL)
- Three kinds of questions [there is hardly any semantic difference between *three kinds of question* and *three kinds of questions*]

According to Biber et al, there is a close relationship between species nouns and determiners. Singular countable nouns appear to behave like uncountables in these expressions. The determiner preceding the species noun occasionally agrees with the noun in the *of*-phrase rather than with the species noun [as in *these kind(sg) of people(pl)*]. Species nouns may be felt to be subordinate in much the same way as a determiner. The demonstrative determiner agrees with the noun following *of*. *These* and *those* are plural demonstrative adjectives. It is the noun following *of* (in *sort/kind of* constructions) which controls subject-verb concord:

- I hate these sort(sg) of things(pl).
- Those type (sg) of crosses (pl).
- These kind(sg) of decisions(pl) are to be taken by the Committee.
- Those sort (sg) of cars (pl) are tremendously expensive to run.
- These sort(sg) of parties(pl) are dangerous.
- These kind/type(sg) of flowers (pl) are sweet-smelling.
- Flowers of that kind are sweet smelling.
- That kind of flower is sweet.
- This sort of problem is quite common.
- These sorts of problems are quite common.
- The sort/sorts of people who are having large families in the US and Ireland are very similar.
- This sort of camera is very expensive.
- Plants of this sort need shady conditions.
- Many sorts of bacteria are resistant to penicillin.
- What sort of school did you go to?
- There are two main types of sleep.
- What sort of things are effects?
- There are two types of bond energy.
- Under these conditions certain species of bacteria break down the waste to form methane gas.

Concord with collective nouns/group nouns: Collective nouns/group nouns refer to groups of people, animals or things or groups of single entities. Singular collective nouns can take singular or plural concord. If the focus is on the group as a whole, the collective nouns take singular(formal) concord and if the focus is on the individuals making up the group, then the collective nouns take plural (notional) concord---whether the group is treated as a single thing or as a collection of individuals. However, singular(formal) agreement is the default. “The difference reflects a difference in point of view: the singular stresses the nonpersonal collectivity of the group, and the plural stresses the personal individuality within the group.”(Quirk et al) Collective nouns are said to have one form but some collective nouns with other meanings are treated as count nouns. According to Sinclair, bacteria, data and media are used as collective nouns with either a singular or plural verb and no change in form, but they have rare singular forms (bacterium, datum, medium) and are therefore count nouns. According to Collins Dictionary, care should be taken that the same collective noun is not treated as both singular and plural in the same sentence: the family is well and sends its best wishes or the family are all well and send their best wishes, but not the family is well and send their best wishes. Singular collective nouns can allow singular concord or plural concord depending on whether the focus is on the group as a whole or on the individuals making up the group: The flock is infected with the disease BUT The Catholic flock are tired of dividing their loyalties; Her family has suffered the anguish of repossession BUT The family are absolutely devastated. The nouns family and crew can allow singular and plural concord. However, singular concord is the preferred pattern. Plural concord is used when the subject is a plural personal pronoun and possessive determiners must be co-referent with the collective noun and the relative pronoun who is used when the verb is plural and the relative pronoun which is used when the verb is singular: *The Government has indicated that it will make provisions in the bill for such an amendment BUT The Government have indicated that they will make provisions in the bill for such an amendment. The government is/are expected to announce its/their tax proposals today ;The government which is expected to announce its tax proposals today has not yet done so. The government who are expected to announce their tax proposals today have not done so .The noun staff can allow singular or plural concord : The entire staff has done an outstanding job this year. The staff were very helpful. When talking about different groups of people, the plural form *staffs* is sometimes used, but it is much less common than *staff*: Collective nouns are of four types: **specific**, **generic**, **unique** and **quantifying collectives**:*

Specific Collectives: Examples : *administration, army, association, audience, assembly, bacteria, band* (musical band), *board, brood, cast, choir, class*(at school/university), *clan, clergy club, college*(the teachers and/or students of a college), *committee, commission, community, company, corporation, congregation, council, couple* (man and wife in a relationship), *crew, crowd, data, delegation, department, enemy, executive, faculty, family, federation, firm, flock ,gang, generation ,government, group, herd, institute, jury, management, majority, minority, media, military, mob, navy, nobility, office, opposition, orchestra, pack, pair , panel, parliament, party*(political party) , *population, public, quartet, school, set, society, staff, team, tribe, trio, troupe, (trade)union, university, woodwind* . These nouns vary for number and definiteness: a committee, the committee, committees.

- The administration(=administrators collectively/ the body of people who administer an organization) is still in the shakedown period.
- The administration are planning more staff cuts.
- The army was finally defeated in the autumn.
- The army was/were called out to enforce the curfew.
- The British Medical Association is/are campaigning for a complete ban on tobacco advertising.
- The audience was/were clapping for 10 minutes. [the group as a single undivided body/as a collection of individuals]
- The audience were enjoying every minute of it.
- The audience was enormous. [an audience of enormous people: the group as a single undivided body]
- The public are tired of demonstrations. [plural]
- The public consists of you and me.[singular]
- The public has a right to know[singular]--BrE
- The public have a right to know[plural]--AmE
- The crowd was/were shouting and cheering.
- The crowd was/were in a cheerful mood.
- Police were called to disperse the crowd.
- The crowd has been dispersed[singular]

- There was a large audience in the theatre. [The agreement of the collective noun with a singular verb suggests that a unified group is being referred to therefore the contextual meaning may be that many people attended the play and therefore perhaps the earnings were higher.]
- The audience were clapping their hands and cheering. [the noun used in a plural construction denotes a group of individuals pointing to every single person in the theatre who was clapping his or her hands.]
- A world-wide television audience was/were enjoying the concert.
- The national assembly has/have voted to adopt the budget.
- The bacteria is/are spread via saliva and nasal mucus.
- Medieval Arabic data show that the length of the day has been increasing.
- Our latest data shows that global warming is a gravest problem.
- They believe that the media is biased against them. [Oxford Dictionary: The word media comes from the Latin plural of medium. In modern English it can be treated as either a singular or plural noun: The media has/have followed the story closely. A new plural form, medias, is also increasingly being used: The medias of several countries have been following the story.]
- The media was/were accused of influencing the final decision.
- The band (A group of musicians) meet/meets for practice every Friday. [when band means group, it is a quantifying collective]
- The board (=a group of people who have power to make decisions and control a company or other organization) is/are unhappy about falling sales.
- The last brood (all the young birds or creatures that a mother produces at one time) of the elderly pair was/were hatched.
- My brother's bunch (a group of people usually having a common interest or association) are basketball fanatics.
- The whole cast performs/performs brilliantly.
- The children's choir perform/performs some Christmas songs here.
- The school choir practises/practise every Monday lunchtime.
- The whole class was/were told to stay behind after school.
- The class of 2020 was/were very regular.
- The class have/have/*has all received the answers. [the quantifying adjunct all indicates plurality]
- The whole class was/were told to stay behind after school.
- The college has/have taught us well.
- The English class are/is reading Shakespeare.
- A class on crochet at the weekends was/were taught by Mr Higgins.
- Is/Are the whole clan coming to visit you for Christmas?
- The club hopes to raise at least \$10 000 for six local charities.
- The club have signed a new coach for next season.
- The committee has/have decided to close the restaurant.
- The committee meets every Thursday.
- The committee consists of/ comprises/*consist four members [here only singular concord is possible]
- The commission has/have recommended the abolition of the examination.
- The committee is/*are chaired by the special guest.
- The committee has[singular] not yet decided how they[plural] should react to the letter.
- The various committees are[plural] now meeting to discuss the proposal.
- A commission has just been appointed to investigate fraud claims.
- A commission has been set up to look at racial tension in the area.
- The community has/have set up a campaign to save the park.
- The whole community gets/get involved in planning the festival.
- The company has taken over by a rival.
- The company (soldiers) was/were advancing towards the east.
- The company makes/make machine parts.
- The corporation is/are making untiring efforts to rescue the flood affected people.
- The congregation has/have stood to sing the hymn.
- The council is to examine ways of reducing traffic in the city centre.
- The council are encouraging the development of the property for both employment and recreation.
- The Arts Council gives grants for local projects.

- The Council of Ministers is the real power in the EEC. [she is on the council=is an elected member of it BUT she works for the council (=is a paid member of its staff)]
- The regional council has/have decided to interfere in the matter.
- The couple(=in the sense of two persons) are happily married .
- Each couple was asked to complete a form.[=as a unit]
- The couple was/were married in 2022.
- The crew was/were extremely helpful.
- The crew is/are waiting for instructions from the captain.
- The crew was crazy about her.
- The three crew were injured.
- Everyone in the movie's cast and crew has done a great job.
- The crowd was/were shouting and cheering.
- The crowd were enormously enthusiastic.
- All the old crowd from my university days were there.
- A big crowd is expected tomorrow for the final match.
- A big crowd was/ were resting there.
- The delegation (a group of delegates)from Spain has/have arrived for a month
- Among them was a delegation from Oxfordshire.
- The French delegation is/are just arriving at the conference.
- The sales department is/are having a Christmas party this week.
- The enemy was/were forced to retreat.
- The union's executive has/have yet to reach a decision.
- The faculty has/have decided to close the common room.
- A new family has/have moved in next door.
- Our family has/have lived in this house for over a hundred years.
- The trade union federation has/have called for a national strike.
- The firm employs/employ 85 000 people around the world.
- The priest's flock (a group of people regularly attending a church) was/were warned against breaking God's law.
- The flock was infected with Typhimurium.
- The Catholic flock are tired of dividing their loyalties.
- The firm (a group of criminals) has /have fought hard to avoid the danger.
- The gang was/were planning a robbery.
- The older generation tend/tends to have more traditional views.
- The younger generation seems/seem to be interested in pop music.
- The Government has/have been considering further tax cuts.
- This group has/have a higher risk of heart disease.
- His group plays/play jazz.
- The herd is/are to be followed by us.
- The institute awards/award three research fellowships each year.
- The jury were divided in their opinion.
- The jury has/have returned a verdict of guilty.
- The jury were/was unanimous in their verdict.
- The management (the people who run and control a business or similar organization) is/are considering closing the factory.
- The new jury were sworn in.
- The jury has awarded the prize for best exhibit in the show to Harry Pearson.
- The jury is selected from the winners in previous years.
- The jury has/have been unable to return a verdict (= reach a decision).
- The majority was/were in favour of banning smoking.
- A large majority of people approve of the death sentence.
- The vast majority of new radio shows fail in their first season on the air.
- A two-thirds majority in both Houses of Congress is needed to overturn a presidential veto.
- A simple majority of the people at the meeting were in favour of the changes.
- A large majority of the population is demanding the restoration of the former government.

- The silent majority takes/take a different view.
- The government's majority (number)is /*are likely to be reduced.
- The majority of her friends are/ * is Irish.
- The majority are Christians. [plural verb]
- The majority agrees with me.[singular verb: it is pedantic but acceptable—Quirk , page 765]
- A small minority refuses/refuse to cooperate.
- The minority was/were in favour of banning smoking.
- The mob was/were preparing to storm the building.
- The navy is/are considering buying six new warships.
- The nobility enjoys/enjoy the best benefits.
- The tax office has/have dismissed the employee.
- The opposition is/are mounting a strong challenge to our business.
- The orchestra has/have played musical instruments very well.
- The pair are/is planning a trip to India together. [We must not use pair to talk about a husband and wife (or two people in a similar relationship). Instead we use *couple*: *They're a nice couple/* pair.*]
- The happy pair is/are going to Spain after their wedding.
- The panel has /have concluded that there was no scientific basis for the claim.
- The panel consists of ten attorneys.
- The advisory panel has/have disagreed with the decision.
- Parliament (it is a collective proper noun) has/have been unable to agree.[the term without *the* is the main law-making institution in the UK, which consists of the House of Commons and the House of Lords
- Despite gradual change, parliament continues to include non-white and working class members.
- The military was/were called in to deal with the riot.
- The Scottish parliament is/are expected to vote in favour of a ban. [in other countries it refers to the main law-making body and is used with *the*]
- The ruling party is/are going to vote for a ban on tobacco.
- The world's population consumes/consume two thirds of the world's resources.
- A string quartet was /were playing Mozart.
- A quartet is/are playing tonight.
- The whole school is/are delighted about Joel's success in the championships.
- The smart set (= rich, fashionable people) is/ are always ready to enjoy everything.
- Society (Singular ---people in general, considered with regard to the structure of laws, etc. that makes it possible to live together) has a right to expect people to obey the law.
- The staff is/are not very happy about the latest pay increase.[according to Biber et al, the word staff is exceptional in that plural concord is by far the more frequent option: The staff carry messages from guest to guest. When staff are absent, a class is split between other teachers]
- The team is/are not playing very well this season.
- The whole tribe seem/seems to have disappeared off the face of the earth.
- The trio have/has clocked up more than 100 years of local authority service between them.
- A dance troupe has/have set out for the destination.
- The union has/have decided to ballot its/their members on the issue .
- The university has/have decided to discontinue the programme.
- The woodwind were/was haunting in the slow movement.
- My age cohort is/are getting into positions of power.
- The orchestra is/are touring Europe this summer.
- Everyone in the movie's cast and crew has done a great job
- None of them in the ship and everyone on the plane was/were happy

Quantifying collectives: There are some collective nouns which are **partitives/of-collectives/quantifying collectives**. These partitives/collectives refer to groups and precede plural nouns. Examples: *audience, band(group), batch, bunch, clump, company, constellation, class* (a class derived by classification: a class of words) *couple (a set of approximately two), crew, crowd, family, flock, gang, group, herd, host, pack, party(group), series, set, shoal, swarm, team, trio, troupe*. These are also called **open-class quantifiers**. According to Peters, either singular or plural concord is possible, depending on whether the singular noun or its plural noun complement (**proximity agreement**) is treated as head. Here we find an overt /understood of complement: A number have accepted the offer (here complement must be recoverable

anaphorically from the context—in other words, the partitive can be used without of-phrase only when it is obvious what we are talking about); They are a pretty wild bunch (of people). Examples:

- An audience of 400 business people was/were present at the business summit.
 - A band of outlaws/rebels was/were protesting against the Government's decision.
 - Each summer a new batch of students tries/try to find work.
 - A bunch of grapes was/*were hanging from the ceiling. [Bunch can apply to a set of things fastened or closely grouped together—unitary conceptualisation: a set of things fastened or closely grouped together -singular. But, in the sense of a group of people it is plural]]
 - A bunch of hooligans was/were seen leaving the premises. [Bunch can refer to a group of people]
 - They are a lovely bunch who have made me feel welcome.
 - There was/were a clump of bushes at the edge of the lawn.
 - A company of 120 soldiers is/are approaching.
 - A constellation of stars is/are not visible with naked eyes.
 - A couple of men was/were seen by me.
 - A crew of sailors was/were steering the ship adroitly.
 - A whole crowd of us (= a lot of us) is/are going to the ball.
 - A big crowd of football supporters has/have gathered outside the stadium.
 - A family of squirrels has/have been living in our garden.
 - A flock of birds was/were chirping in the yard.
 - A gang of robbers has/have attacked the house.
 - A group of boys are/is singing well.
 - A group of onlookers were injured. [indicating simple quantification]
 - A herd of elephants is/are trumpeting.
 - A pack of journalists was/were avoided by us.
 - A pack of wolves was/were roaming about in the forest.
 - A party of 40 children has/have gone to France.
 - A host of advisors was/were waiting for us.
 - A series of scandals over the past year has not helped public confidence in the administration.
 - There has been a series of attacks on tourists in the city this summer.
 - There has been a set of assumptions/friends.
 - A shoal of fish is/are swimming in the pond.
 - A swarm of photographers has/have followed the star's car.
 - A team of investigators is/are investigating the case.
 - A trio of English runners has/have featured in the women's 1 500 metres.
 - A troupe of singers was/were entertaining the audience.
 - A pair of trousers is[sg] on the sofa.
 - Todd's trousers are[pl] on the sofa.
 - This pair of shoes needs[sg] new heels.
 - These shoes need[pl] new heels.
- [N.B: Modifiers can be placed before the collective noun or after the *of* or in both positions: *a large flock of sheep*, *a flock of small sheep*, *a little swarm of minute birds*, *great bunches of dried herbs*, etc. Modifiers may modify the group (*large flock*) or entities making up the group (*small sheep*). The adjectives qualify the whole of the complex noun phrase rather than the collective noun alone.]
- A bunch of grapes/flowers/keys is hanging.[sg]
 - A bunch of girls is/are waiting at the bus stop.[sg/pl]
 - There is/are a small crowd of people around.[sg/pl]
 - There is/are a shoal of fish seen in the pond.[sg/pl]

Generic Collectives: Examples: *the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, the clergy, the church, the elite, the gentry, the intelligentsia, the laity, the media, the proletariat, the public, the press, the rank and file, the youth* (of today). Examples:

- The aristocracy want/wants to enjoy power.
- The bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century was/were mostly unhumanitarian.
- All the local clergy were asked to attend the ceremony.

- The local clergy were/was asked to attend the ceremony.
- The church has strongly condemned the violence.[only singular]
- The Church has a duty to condemn violence. [only singular]
- In these countries, only the elite has/have been able to afford an education for their children.
- The ruling elite have/has resisted all attempts at reform.
- Only the educational elite goes/go to Oxford or Cambridge.
- The local gentry was/were very kind to us.
- But the contribution that the intelligentsia has/have made to its development represent their supreme service to the revolution.
- The laity is/are participating in the program.
- The media was/were accused of influencing the final decision.
- The proletariat was hardly more impressed by the Manifesto.
- The proletariat, in contrast, own no means of production whatever.
- The public has/have a right to know what is contained in the report.
- The Press was/were not allowed to attend the trial.
- The rank and file(the ordinary members of an organization rather than the leaders) has/have lost confidence in the party leadership.
- The rank and file (the ordinary soldiers who are not officers) is/are advancing towards the south.
- These are the youth of our future.
- Many people think the youth (young people considered as a group) of today is/are not taught proper standards of behaviour.

[N.B: Her crockery was/*were very ornate. The luggage has/*have been lost.]

Unique Collectives /Collective Proper Names: They refer to those proper nouns which denote official bodies and organizations. Examples: the Air Force, British Rail, the BBC, *the Commons* (UK), *the United Nations*, *the United States*, *the Senate*, *the Vatican*, *the Papacy*, *Parliament*, *(the) Congress* (US), *the African National Congress* (a political party/organization), *Tesco*, *the Kremlin*, *the Arab League*.

- The Indian Air Force has/have been much stronger.
- British rail has/have prospered very much.
- The BBC is/are responsible for the news.
- The Commons (plural - the part of Parliament whose members are elected by the people of the country) are going to vote for the issue.
- The Commons (Singular-- the building where the members of the Commons meet) was selected for the meeting to be held.
- The United Nations (name of institution) is/are unable to act.
- The United States is the name of a country. [Although United States is sometimes found with a plural verb after it, this is quite rare and it is much more common to use a singular verb.]
- The United States has/have decided to help the COVID-19 affected people.
- The Senate has/have voted to support the President's defence plans.
- The Vatican (the centre of government of the Roman Catholic Church) has/have issued a further statement this morning.
- The Vatican(singular-- the group of buildings in Rome where the Pope lives and works) is the place where the Pope lives and works.
- The twelfth-century papacy was rooted in a distant and revered past.[singular]
- But is this in a rather different sense to that in which the papacy understands itself? [singular-no plural]
- Parliament has/have been unable to agree.
- Congress (the name of the group of people who are elected to make laws, in the US consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives) has/have voted to delay a decision.
- The congress(the name of the group of people who are elected to make laws, in the US consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives) has/have agreed to the tax-cutting package.
- The African National Congress (ANC) is a political party in South Africa.
- The ANC has/have decided to oppose the bill.
- The Kremlin (the government of Russia and the former USSR,) has/have decided to help India.

- The Kremlin (singular--the buildings of the Kremlin in Moscow) is the place where the high officials of the government assemble.
- The Arab League (a regional organization)was formed in Cairo on 22 March 1945, initially with six members: Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria.
- The Arab League has/have decided to help the Americans.
- Tesco sells/sell organic milk.
- The Netherlands is a member of the European Union[plural place names referring to a single country usually take a singular verb]
- The Seychelles lie[pl] in the middle of the Indian Ocean. [the name of an island group usually takes a plural verb but we can use a singular or plural verb when talking about the group as a political unit--- Eastwood]
- The Solomon Islands is/are a nation-state.[But *Sundarbans* is the name of a mangrove forest]
- The mangrove-dominated Ganges Delta – the Sundarbans – is a complex ecosystem.
- The Sundarbans is[sg] home to the largest remaining tiger population in Asia.
- The Sundarbans is a maze of streams and low-lying islands periodically inundated by the tides and frequently changing in outline. The total area of the islands is about equal to the area of the streams.
- The Sundarbans has about 102 islands.[sg]
- The Regulations of the Senate is a very important document.
- The Annals of the Australian Historical Society is edited by Dr. Proctor.

There are a few collective nouns for people and animals which invariably take plural concord: *cattle, folk, livestock, people, police, poultry, stock, vermin*. There are a few classical loanwords which can take singular or plural concord. When they take singular concord, they are regarded as collectives in English: *algae, bacteria, criteria, data, insignia, media, phenomena*. It is to be noted that sports teams can take singular or plural concord: England, India, Tottenham, etc.

- Cattle that stray onto the electric railway line are killed instantly.
- Cattle were first domesticated in Neolithic times.
- Country folk say that he is a hard man.
- I'm sure there are some folk who would rather they weren't here.
- The radio folk have some homework to do between now and Thursday.
- The young folk were emigrating enmasse.
- Livestock/stock (farm animals) are kept on the farm.
- At least ten people were killed in the crash.
- There were a lot of people at the party.
- Police (without the) are investigating the break-in.
- The police have arrived to break up the battle.
- Police have appealed for witnesses to come forward.
- Poultry(plural--chickens, ducks and geese, kept for their meat or eggs) are to be reared in the garden.
- Poultry(singular-- meat from chickens, ducks and geese)is eaten by us.
- Vermin are a threat to the crops.
- England (a sports team) is/are through to World Cup finals.
- The New York Giants (a sports team) has/have set out for Australia.
- Tottenham (a sports team) is/are in the league.

Concord with unit nouns: *Unit nouns* “make it possible to split up an undifferentiated mass and refer to separate instances of a phenomenon.” But collective nouns provide a collective reference for separate entities. While collective nouns refer with respect to countables, unit nouns refer with respect to uncountables. Uncountables refer to something that cannot be counted; they do not vary for number. They may be singular and plural. Singular uncountables include milk, stone, water equipment, etc. and plural uncountables include clothes, trousers, scissors, thanks, etc. (*a thank, *a clothe. *clothes* is not the plural of *cloth*. *Cloths* is the plural of *cloth*.) Grammatically unit nouns function like ordinary countable nouns and take an of-phrase (of-complement) specifying the type of matter/phenomenon. If the unit noun is singular, then the verb used with it is singular and if the unit noun is plural, the verb used with it is plural. They refer to an amount or quantity: *act, ball, bit, chip, clump, chunk, dash, drop, flake, fragment, game, grain, heap, iota, item, knob, length, loaf,*

lump, mass, morsel, mound, mountain, pad, piece, pile, pinch, pool, portion, pair, rasher, reel, roll, scrap, sheaf, sheet, shred, slice, slip, sliver, speck, spot, sprinkling, strip, touch, trace, twist, wad, whit.

- A heroic act of bravery was displayed by the soldier. [An (deliberate)act of adultery/aggression/courage/defiance/folly/kindness/terror/terrorism/violence/sabotage/revenge/madness/extraordinary irresponsibility/love/faith/vandalism/sympathy/trust]
- There was a ball of paper on the table.
- A big bit of plaster has just fallen down from the ceiling. [a little/big bit of information/good news/advice/luck/shopping/pizza/paper/exercise/chocolate/support/gardening/glass/tension/imagination/cake/beef/cheese/sugar/cloth/paper/glass/wood/conversation/excitement/fun]
- A nice bit of fish has been bought by me for dinner.
- Bits of paper/wood/plastic were scattered here and there on the floor.
- Here's a bit of news that may interest you.
- A chip/chips of wood is /are needed. [a chip of glass/ice/paint/stone]
- A clump (a small mass of) of her hair was torn out by him. [a clump of dust]
- There were big clumps of soil on his boots.
- A chunk of cheese/masonry was seen there. [a chunk of meat/rock]
- A substantial chunk of our budget has been taken by this one project.
- A dash of lemon juice needs adding. [a dash of colour/ jazz/vinegar/romance/ Morocco]
- There was a drop of blood on his finger. [a drop of rain/water/oil/sweat/milk/brandy/sympathy]
- There were little drops of paint on the kitchen floor.
- flakes of snow/paint.
- Police found fragments of glass near the scene.
- Fragments of paper.
- Here are some useful bits of information. (quantificational)
- There is a bit of information. (quantificational)
- Four bits(=pieces) of cheese (non-quantificational)
-
- There is seen a heap of paper.
- He invited me to play a game of chess(a particular competition, match, or occasion when people play a game) [a game of cards/golf/tennis/baseball.
- There isn't a grain of truth in those rumours. [a grain of salt/sand/sugar]
- There were grains of sugar on the table. [crumbs of sugar]
- There was an enormous heap of junk mail lying on the doormat when we got back.[a heap of rubbish/clothes/thanks/dirty laundry]
- Not an iota of evidence was seen to support his claim.
- Are there any items of furniture you want to take with you?
- My largest single item of expenditure is the computer.
- An essential item of clothing for hillwalking is a windproof jacket.
- Several items of clothing (= clothes)are found on the floor.[an item of historical interest/clothing/furniture/jewellery]
- A knob of butter was put in the frying pan.[knob means a small amount of something solid]
- a length of rope/string/wire/paper.
- A loaf of bread was taken by me in the morning.
- What emerges from that tainted oven will likely be a typical loaf of local politics which was leavened by big money.
- This sauce has lumps in it. [without of-complement]
- A heavy lump of clay was found in the yard. [a lump of coal/cheese/wood/butter]
- There were lumps of mud all over the carpet.
- A mass of cold air is coming from the north. [a mass of snow/rubble/colour/rock/data]
- A tumbling mass of water has cascaded down the staircase.
- A seething mass of volcanic activity was seen from a great distance.
- A tasty morsel of food was eaten by Pabitra. [a tiny morsel of bread, a juicy morsel of gossip, a morsel of the meat ordered by him, a morsel of cheese/good news]
- a small mound(=pile) of rice/sand

- A mountain of debt was faced by the school. [a mountain of work/paperwork/overfeeding]
- BUT: Standing before us was a huge, muscled mountain of a man. [mountain means ‘the very large size of something/somebody’.]
- I always keep a pad(a number of pieces of paper that have been fastened together along one side, used for writing or drawing on of paper) by the phone.
- A small piece of paper was found on the floor. [a piece of paper/wood/metal/land/cake/cheese/meat/bread/scrap metal/cake/chocolate/furniture/clothing /equipment/ a piece of paper (=a whole sheet)/ a piece of information/advice/ a piece of china (=an object made of china)/research/work/fruit/jewellery/evidence/legislation/quicklime/sculpture/waste ground/land//music/writing]
- There was a piece of grit in my eye.
- There were pieces of broken glass all over the road.
- Another typical piece of Owen's work is the poem, 'The Sentry'.
- A pile of cash was made on the sale of his house by him. [a pile of paper/dirty washing/sand/mending/melting snow/clothes/kindling/masonry/ rubble]
- There are piles of people looking for jobs in this area.
- There is an enormous pile of washing-up in the sink.
- A pinch of salt is to be mixed with the mixture. [a pinch of cayenne pepper/cinnamon/curry powder/ground ginger/nutmeg/paprika/snuff/scepticism/sugar/dried thyme/pepper]
- There is a pool of blood in which his body was lying. [a pool of oil/water/light/surplus labour/capital/fluid]
- A generous portion of meat was enjoyed by the rich person.
- A pair of trousers/pants/jeans was bought by me. [a pair of glasses/binoculars/scissors] [plural of pair is pair in standard English]
- A thick rasher(=a thin slice of bacon) of bacon was bought by them
- Scraps of information have been collected by the researcher. [a scrap of paper/cloth/material/wood]
- reels of magnetic tape
- a reel of string/tape/thread
- a roll of fabric/wrapping paper
- There's not a scrap of (= no) evidence to suggest that he committed the crime.
- He waved a sheaf of paper at me.
- A clean/blank sheet of paper (= with no writing on it) was required by them. [a sheet of A4/blotting paper/ glass/plastic/plywood/steel/plastic]
- Just a few shreds of cloth were left. [Usually plural: shreds of paper/cloud]
- There's still a shred of hope that a peace agreement can be reached.
- There isn't a shred of evidence to support her accusation
- A slice of bread was given to me. [a slice of pizza/toast/pie/ham/cake/lemon/tomato]
- A sliver of light has showed under the door. [a sliver of glass/cake/broken glass/flesh]
- I wrote it down on a slip of paper.
- There isn't a speck of dust anywhere in the house. [a speck of grease/dirt/dandruff/paint]
- Each speck of light is a planetary system.
- There were specks of paint all over the floor.
- A speck (= a small amount) of light was noticed by us at the end of the tunnel.
- Not a speck of talcum powder, not a smear of soap, was seen on any surface.
- There was a spot of rain in the afternoon, but otherwise the weather has been perfect. [a spot (=a small amount) of trouble/lunch/shopping/bother/blood]
- A sprinkling of pepper was added. [a generous sprinkling of fresh mint, a sprinkling of milled pepper/ brown sugar/ furniture/ sun/grey]
- A sprinkling of snow has covered the hilltops.
- A strip of material was needed now. [a strip of paper/fabric/leather/garden/lead]
- A strip of sand between the cliffs and the sea was seen in African.
- Cut fish, shrimp, and strips of beef or liver are eaten eagerly.
- There was a touch of sarcasm in her voice. [a touch of frost/frivolity/arrogance]
- There was a touch of irony/humour in her voice.
- A touch of class is to be added to your bedroom by dint of this furniture.

- Traces of poison in his stomach were revealed by the post-mortem. [a trace of bitterness/blood/cocaine/rust/humour]
- There is just a trace of grey in his hair.
- There is (singular verb) no trace of conceit, arrogance or class consciousness about her.
- mineral water with a twist of lemon.
- The nurse used a wad of cotton wool to stop the bleeding. [BUT: Quantifying noun- They had a wad/wads of money (= a large amount).]
- There is not a whit of sense in that head of his ![a whit of difference/mischief]
- A mass of cold air is coming from the north.

[N.B.: We may insert modifiers, if needed, either before the unit noun or after the *of*, without any semantic difference or both. Modifiers may modify the unit noun or the undifferentiated mass or both. The modifiers modify the complex noun phrase rather than the unit noun alone. Example: *a valuable piece of advice—a piece of valuable, a bit of good news, a nice bit of fish—an astonishing/good piece of news, a thick piece of broken glass, no specific item of bad news*. When *pair* is used with the entities which occur in groups of two and are plural uncountables, *pair* is treated as a unit noun: a pair of clippers/glasses/pants/pliers/pyjamas/tweezers/jeans/tights/sunglasses. But when *pair* is used with ordinary plural countables, it is treated as a quantifying noun: arms/eyes/gloves/hands/shoes/socks. *Couple* is used with plural countables. According to Biber et al, while both the singular form *a pair of* and the plural form *pairs of* are used for an exact specification of number, *couple* usually indicates a small approximate number rather than just two and does not indicate two items that belong together as a set: a couple of days/feet(measurement)/hours/babies/boys/balloons/examples/kids. *Couple* means “two or a few things that are similar or the same, or two or a few people who are in some way connected”.]

Concord with Quantifying nouns: According to Biber et al, quantifying nouns refer to quantities of both masses and entities, which are specified in a following *of*-phrase by uncountable nouns and plural countables. Quantifying collectives and unit nouns are special cases of quantifying nouns and quantifying collectives are used with countable nouns, whereas unit nouns are used with uncountable nouns.

A.Nouns denoting type of container: Quantifying nouns can denote a type of container. If these nouns are singular, they take singular concord and if they are plural, they take plural concord. We may refer to the contents of the container and the container itself. We may also refer to the contents. Nouns ending in *-ful/-load* are as follows. Examples: *bag, barrel, basin, basket, bottle, bowl, box, bucket, can, carton, case, cask, crate, cup, glass, jar, jug, mug, pack, packet, plate, pot, sack, spoon, tablespoon, tank, teaspoon, tin, tub, tube, tumbler*, etc.

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- The boy has eaten a whole box of chocolates. [contents, not container]
 - He drank another bottle of wine. [contents, not container]
 - A barrel of apples was being carried by the worker.[container]
 - There are three baskets of apples.[container]
 - Packets of data are multiplexed together.[container]
 - A piece of paper is lifeless.[container]
 - Two pieces of metal are being rubbed together.[container]
 - There is a truckload of evidence to support my contention that that self-regulatory body prioritises the interests of its members, rather than those of the public.
 - Lorryloads—not truckloads—of tobacco were coming in.
 - There are only a few bagfuls of tobacco left.
 - Other nouns are: A barrel of laughs(metaphorically)/beer/oil/pepper/apples/brandy/fish/powder; A basket of vegetables/eggs/flowers/bread/fruit/toiletries/pension plans; A box of books/chocolates/cigars/matches/soap/tissues ;A crate of champagne/explosives/fruit ; A cup of coffee/tea/soup; A keg of beer/stout: A pack of cards/cigarettes/notes/peanuts; A packet of biscuits/candles/chips/cocaine/envelopes/data; A sack of scum/coal/grain/mail/potatoes/rice/rubbish; a busload of tourists; a coachload of football fans; An armload of cans /boxes/responsibility/papers/deeds/magazines/clothing/garments/mail/wood/provisions/newspapers/bedcovers; An armful (of books/lilies/roses/ irises/tulips/freesias/hastily gathered

clothing/blankets/clothes/groceries/briefs/straw/grass/magazines/pots and pans/red roses); A basketful of apples/rubbish/goods/gifts/surprises; A bellyful of one's moaning/their lies/such events/two wars; A boatload of refugees/tourists/gunpowder/migrants/fish/women and children/directors/young foals/soldiers/cargo/goods/panic-stricken humanity/settlers/coal; A truckload of rice/sand/money/supporting legislation/cigarettes/meat/tobacco/disbelief/oranges/concrete/goods/urinals/wood/the farmers/money/soldiers; A bowlful of soup/rice/water; A dishful of soup/cereal/rice/noodles/porridge/water; An earful of cymbals; An eyeful of grit/sand; A forkful of cake/his pie/beans/food; A fistful of cash/dollars/matches/money; A glassful of /a handful of gravel/peanuts/pencils/salt/sand/boys/enthusiasts/people/cases/films/occasions/sites; A houseful of furniture/visitors/women/children/mud/servants/people/ghosts; A fistful of acting awards/crumpled dollars/cash/matches/money; A handful of biscuits were/was placed on the table; A kettleful of warm water; A jugful of water/milk; A mouthful of pie/meat/salad/tea/sand/bread/cake/coffee/cereal/dirt/food/ice cream/teeth; A tankful of water; A planetful of nonentities/humans/men/people; A plateful of spaghetti/toast/baked beans/pudding/biscuits/cold bacon; A pocketful of tissues/money/gold coins/cash/photographs/cart keys/change/credit cards/cablegrams/ready money/food/documents/money; A roomful of people/guests/boxes/toys/elderly people/nurses/furniture/ 65 guitars/kittens/cats; A shovelful of coal/snow/sand/earth/dirt; A spoonful of broth/cream/custard/sprouts/stuffing/sugar/tea/soda/beans/mustard/soup/subsidy/tea/jam; A tankful of fuel/petrol/diesel/sand/fish; A teaspoonful of tea/pesticide/sugar; A thimbleful of whisky/resources/salt/encouragement/gas; A fistful of money; a spoonful of sugar; a mouthful of tea; a houseful of people.

- There were only a handful of guests at the reception.
 - A handful of professional athletes make millions, but most do not do so well.
 - At that stage there are handfuls of people who still cannot meet their debt.
 - There are handfuls of cuttings to this effect to which everyone has access and which no doubt many of us have read.
 - There were only a handful of people there.
 - However, there were a handful of occasions at Cely when her husband's restraining influence was very much a factor.
 - An armful of red roses was held by Elene.
 - A handful(=an amount of something that can be held in one hand) of bread was thrown to the birds.
 - Two decades ago, there were only a handful(=a small number of people or things)of sonar devices in the Great Lakes, Lusardi said.
 - They derive great pleasure from bringing back an *armful* of spoils which have been heavily marked down from a fictitious price, probably, to the proper price.
 - An armful of bottles of water was held by the rich man[sg]
- [N.B.: we can use the phrases like three coffees or two teas or three sugars to mean 'three cups of coffee', 'two cups of tea' and 'three spoonfuls of sugar'.]

B.Nouns denoting Shape: Quantifying nouns can indicate the shape of an amount of something. If the noun is singular, the verb is singular and if it is plural, the verb is plural. Example: ball, column, heap, mountain, pile, ring, shaft, square, stick, strip, thread, triangle, tuft, wall and wedge. Heap and pile can be also used to indicate exaggeration or a very large amount: Examples: A heap (=an untidy pile/mass; a messy pile) of rubble/clothes/rubbish/dirty laundry/boulders; a column of figures; Heaps of common sense; Heaps of love/praise; A pile (a number of things that have been placed on top of each other) of clothes/paper/papers/unopened letters/rubble/dirty washing; A small pile of manure/dry leaves; Piles of gusto; a pile of money; (figurative) a shaft of inspiration.; a strip of material; a narrow strip of leather; A stick (a long, thin piece of something) of gum/dynamite/butter/celery/incense/driftwood/rhubarb/chewing gum/chalk; A wedge of bronze/ice [a stick of furniture=a piece of furniture]; a wedge (a piece of something, especially food, in the shape of a triangle) of cake/cheese; a bundle of sticks/newspapers/books/clothes.

- The sun was a huge ball of fire low on the horizon.
- There was a ball of yarn/string/wool on the table.
- There were two balls of yarn/string/wool on the table.
- Comets are balls of ice and dirt that circle the sun.
- A column of smoke has risen from the chimney.
- The villagers were literally surrounded by a ring of fire.
- I've got a heap (=a lot of) of things to do.
- There's heaps (a lot of) of time before the plane leaves.
- There was a heap of stones where the building used to be.
- On the end of the desk was a heap of newspapers.
- There was a huge heap of blankets and pillows on the bed.
- Here there were piles of newspapers, heaps of books, manuscripts, labels, rubber stamps, envelopes.
- Isako is making heaps(=a lot) of money now that she's in business for herself.
- Beneath were heaps of dry leaves, enough to cover many men.
- I found it in a pile of documents on his desk.
- There was a pile of dirt on the floor.
- He made a pile (=a lot of) of cash on the sale of his house.
- He walked out leaving a pile (=a lot of) of debt behind him.
- I have got piles (=a lot) of work to do.
- Standing before us was a huge, muscled mountain of a man.
- A shaft of moonlight fell on the lake.
- A shaft of (sun)light came through the open door.
- The floor was tiled in squares of grey and white marble.
- A square of light shone from the skylight.
- Cut a strip of paper 12cm wide.
- His hands were tied behind his back with a strip of fabric.
- A thread of light emerged from the keyhole.
- a silvery thread of water
- Thin threads of blood are glittering on his forehead and cheeks.
- A triangle of snooker balls.
- She had tufts of hair in her armpits like clumps of grass.
- The boat struck a solid wall of water.
- The investigators were confronted by a wall of silence.
- a solid wall of fog
- He had only a few tufts of hair on his chin.

C. Nouns denoting shape and movement: They are dribble, gush, gust, jet, spurt stream, and torrent. If the noun is singular, the verb is singular and if it is plural, the verb is plural.

- A dribble of blood
- Add just a dribble of oil.
- a dribble of saliva
- a gush of blood
- Showers with pumps are more expensive, but they deliver a really powerful gush of water.
- A gust of wind blew his hat off.
- She could hear gusts of laughter (= sudden, loud laughter) from within the room.
- The pipe burst and jets of water shot across the room.
- Little jets of steam have spurted from the engine.
- She turned on the hose and a jet of water sprayed across the yard.
- The whale blew a jet of water into the air.
- a great spurt of blood
- There was a sudden spurt of flame.
- He blew out a stream of cigar smoke.
- Giant turbines blast a stream of air into the tube.
- a torrent of abuse/criticism
- He let out a torrent of abuse/angry words.

D. Nouns denoting quantities/large quantities: Nouns denoting quantities are *amount, dribble, portion*, Nouns denoting large quantities are *load, loads, mountain, mountains, mass* and *masses*. Examples:

- A large amount of money has been collected. (sg)
- Large amounts of money were collected(pl)
- A certain amount of time has already been spent on the project. [a (big/tiny) amount of money/information/work/time/cash/space/material/food/energy/water/help/salt/freedom/reclaimed glass/pocket money/oxygen/sand/land/difficulty/trouble/public sympathy/envy/dirt]
- There was a fair amount of traffic on the roads.
- Varying amounts of rust and grit were contained in the tap water.
- Small amounts of land were used for keeping animals.
- A huge amount of public anger was caused by the new tax.
- a generous portion of meat
- There was a dribble (a very small amount) of brandy in the bottom of the bottle.
- He ordered a double portion of ham and eggs.
- You should eat several portions of fruit a day.
- We saw a load of houses before we bought this one.
- He wrote loads and loads of letters to people.
- You're talking a load of rubbish.
- There were a load of people there.
- She's got loads of friends.
- They all had loads of fun at the park.
- A load of nonsense/complaints/batteries/cars/fuel/junk/money/stuff/bullshit/crap/garbage/rubbish
- Loads of books/cakes/friends/girls/money/things/work
- And all the time it was a load of rubbish.
- Can I say also what a load of rubbish the story lines are in Coronation Street at the moment.
- A mass of blood/bodies/detail/flames/material/stuff
- Masses of abstentions/homework/money/neurons/people
- a mass of blonde hair (=a large quantity of)
- Both titles give readers a mass of information.
- A huge mass of material has been organized into a clear narrative.
- The page was covered with a mass of figures.
- a chaotic mass of ideas
- There were masses of people in the shops yesterday.
- I've got masses of work to do.
- There is masses of cake left over from the party.
- The explosion reduced the church to a mass of rubble.
- The forest is a mass of colour in autumn.
- There were masses of people in town today.
- A mass of earth and granite slid down into the narrow gorge.
- We had to wade through masses of seaweed.
- a mass of grinning teenage faces.
- a huge mass of data
- There was a mass of people around the club entrance.
- The bus station was a seething mass of people.
- Soon afterwards, as in the Western Middle Ages, there were masses of peasant serfs, and great feudal States.
- a mountain of work
- We made mountains of sandwiches.
- The school was facing a mountain of debt.
- The enquiry generated a mountain of paperwork.
- A quantity of jewellery was taken during the burglary.
- The soldiers discovered a large quantity of weapons hidden under the floor of a disused building.
- You only need a very small quantity of cement to mix with the sand.
- Large quantities of illegal drugs had been discovered. (countable)
- Aid workers have delivered huge quantities of food to the refugee camps. (uncountable)

[N.B.: *Loads* (=very much) can be used as an adverb-an intensifying adverb: *loads better; thanks loads*. It is to be noted that *clump* can be used as a unit noun and a collective noun. The nouns which can be used with both uncountable nouns and plural nouns are *amount, clump, heap, mass, mountain, pile, portion*.]

E. Plural Numerals: Plural numerals can operate as quantifying nouns and can be used as determiners or heads of noun phrases. Example: tens of thousands, hundreds of people, thousands of applicants, zillions of congratulations, billions of thanks, dozens of books, dozens of animals, scores of drivers/people/women, etc.

- Hundreds of thousands of people are at risk.
- hundreds of miles away
- I have a hundred and one things to do.
- Four hundred (people) are expected to attend.
- Two hundred (pounds) was withdrawn from the account. [We Always use a plural verb with hundred or hundreds, except when an amount of money is mentioned]
- There were hundreds of people at the pool today.
- There are one hundred pence in a pound.
- They were scarcely two hundred yards distant.

F. Standardized Measure Terms: Measure terms can function as quantifying nouns. Examples:

- A pint of beer /blood/gas/gin/milk/oil/petrol/water/whisky/wine
- A gallon of beer /blood/gas/gin/milk/oil/petrol/water/whisky/wine
- A quart of beer /blood/gas/gin/milk/oil/petrol/water/whisky/wine
- A litre of beer /blood/gas/gin/milk/oil/petrol/water/whisky/wine
- His brief was to provide 10 million square feet of office space on a 16-acre site.
- In this case, it is two foot /*feet pike.
- Large tank required I am going to set up a two foot /*feet tank.
- A foot/inch/yard/metre of cloth/concrete/earth/fabric/material/sediment/wire
- An ounce/pound/gram/kilogram/kilo of
butter/cheese/cocaine/flour/gold/heroin/margarine/meat/opium/potatoes/sugar
- A ton/tonne of aluminium/bricks/explosives/ore/sewage
- Five yards of velvet
- Four pounds of strawberries are very useful [BUT: Ninety pounds is[sg] all she weighs. Three hundred pounds is a lot of money. 90 miles an hour is much too fast.]
- Five ounces of cheese were needed to make it.
- The first two years have [pl]been very successful.[BUT: Ten years is a long time.]
- A ton of bricks is sufficient for the construction.
- A host of show business celebrities (=a large number of) has/have pledged their support.
- A whole crowd of us (= a lot of us) are going to the ball.
- There's been a rash of car thefts in the city centre.

Concord with Summation plurals: Summation plurals refer to “nouns ending in -s which are normally construed in the singular, because they are the standard names for an entity which is in some sense collective.”(Biber et al) This is why notional agreement is taken by them. They denote the names of diseases or names of games and sports, and names of academic subjects. Nouns ending in -ics denoting subjects, sciences, etc are usually treated as singular. But when some of them denote both one's knowledge of the subject and the practical application of results, they are treated as plurals. Some of them are said to have a related singular form: *acoustic, ethic, classic, statistic*. Examples:

- The new concert hall has two distinct acoustics. (Huddleston)
- Two distinct ethics are in conflict in this school.
- Two newly published statistics reveal that alcohol is good for you.
- The novel may become a modern classic.

- English classics such as ‘Alice in Wonderland’, ‘War and Peace’ is a classic, etc. are most impressive.
- Measles is potentially a very serious illness. [disease]
- Mumps is quite serious if you get it as an adult. [disease]
- Shingles is caused by the same virus as chickenpox. [disease]
- Tuberculosis and malnutrition were prevalent, as was rickets.[disease]
- Dominoes was being played by a group of young men.
- Athletics is largely an individual sport.
- Checkers/draughts was played by those boys.
- Gymnastics is one of the most popular Olympic events.
- Billiards is played with two cue balls.
- Darts is becoming very popular as a spectator sport.
- Craps is a gambling game played with two dice.
- Fives is a game played especially in British public schools in which players hit a ball with their hand or a bat against the walls of a court.
- Ninepins is a game in which we roll a ball at nine bottle-shaped objects to try to hit them so that they fall.
- Statistics is his forte.
- Linguistics is the scientific study of language.
- Ethics is the branch of philosophy that deals with moral principles.[BUT: *ethics* is a plural noun in *professional/business/medical ethics/a code of ethics* –here *ethics* denote moral rules or principles of behaviour for deciding what is right and wrong .]
- To me, physics is a fascinating subject.
- Statistics is a branch of mathematics. [BUT: *statistics* is a plural noun in “the official crime statistics”]
- Mathematics is the science of quantities.
- Acoustics is the science of sound waves. [=the scientific study of sound waves]
- The acoustics(= the shape and size of a room, which affect the way sound is heard in it) in here are terrible.
- The hall has excellent acoustics (plural in the sense of the shape and size of a room, which affect the way sound is heard in it).
- Seats are small but plush, and the acoustics are excellent.
- Classics is the study of ancient Greek and Roman culture, especially their languages and literature.
- Economics (=the study of the way in which money and goods are produced and used) is often studied with politics.
- The economics (= the way in which money influences whether a plan, business etc will work effectively) do not add up.
- The economics (= the way in which money influences whether a plan, business etc will work effectively) of the scheme are not so sound.
- Gymnastics is one of the most popular Olympic events.
- Mental/intellectual/moral gymnastics (plural) refer to very clever thinking.
- Verbal/linguistic gymnastics(plural) refer to using words in a very clever way.
- Phonetics is a branch of linguistics.
- Politics is said to be the art of the impossible. [the science of government]
- His politics are rather conservative. [political views]
- His politics are somewhat to the left of my own. [plural concord]
- The dominoes were all in the box. (pl)
- Measles are breaking out all over her face. [reference to particular objects or instances]

According to Quirk, et al, in some cases, there are forms without -s for special uses. When nouns for academic subjects (*economics, linguistics, physics, statistics*, etc), games and sports (*athletics, dominoes, gymnastics, quoits*, etc) and diseases (*measles, mumps*, etc) are used to refer to particular objects or instances and are no longer names, they take plural. Some of these nouns can have singular and plural forms when they mean physical thing:

- Tom laid a domino on the table.
- Statistics is a branch of mathematics. [singular concord]

- These statistics (=these figures) show that exports are still low. [plural concord]
- There is a surprising statistic in your latest report.
- His politics (=his political opinions) are very left-wing.
- A new ethic is needed in the world today.
- Has the new coach found a tactic that works?
- Economics is a difficult subject. [SG]
- His economics sound like those of a shopkeeper.[PL]
- Dominoes makes a great spectator sport.[SG]
- The dominoes were all in the box.[PL]
- Measles/mumps is raging through the neighbourhood.[SG]
- Measles are breaking out all over her face.[PL]
- Maths was my favourite subject.[sg]
- Droughts is a board game.
- Bowls is a game played on an area of very smooth grass, in which players take turns to roll bowls as near as possible to a small ball.
- Darts is a game in which darts are thrown at a round board marked with numbers for scoring. Darts is often played in British pubs.
- These darts are quite heavy[the objects, not the game]
- The statistics are available on the Internet[=some specific figures]

Summation plurals also refer those nouns ending in -s which refer to composite concepts. They denote a tool, instrument, article of dress, etc that consist of two equal parts joined together. They are called **binary nouns/bipartites/bipartite nouns**. Examples: **Tools & Instruments:** bellows, bifocals, binoculars, pliers, secateurs, bellows; glasses, nutcrackers, spectacles, goggles, scales [a balance]; clippers, forceps, pincers, pliers, secateurs, scissors, shears, tongs, tweezers. **Articles of dress:** bathers, beremudas, bloomers, braces, breeches, britches, briefs, corduroys, culottes, daks, dungarees, fatigues, flannels, jeans, jodhpurs, knickers, leathers, leggings, longjohns, overalls, pants, pajamas(American), plus fours, pyjamas(British), shorts, slacks, suspenders, tights, trousers, trunks and undies. Although Summation plurals usually take plural concord, they are notionally singular. There are many summation plurals which can take the indefinite article when they are pre-modified. When they are used before another noun, the singular form is used. *Compasses* can be used in the singular in the sense of 'instrument for drawing circles' and 'an instrument of navigation':

- Binoculars are an instrument, like two small telescopes fixed together, that makes objects that are far away seem nearer when you look through it.
- We looked at the birds through binoculars.
- Pliers are a small tool made of two crossed pieces of metal, used to hold small things or to bend and cut wire.
- On the whole, good secateurs are safer and cleaner for your roses, as well as yourself.
- There was a pair of heavy secateurs in a spare wheelbarrow.
- Bellows is/are an object used for blowing air into a fire to make it burn better.
- Glasses were worn by the person with weak eyesight.
- Spectacles (=eyeglasses) are glasses that help us see.
- The bathroom scales are a shrine to which believers turn daily.
- Clippers are a special tool with two blades, used for cutting small pieces from something.
- Braces are a pair of narrow straps that stretch from the front of the trousers over your shoulders to the back to hold them up.
- I want two trousers/a scissors [plural]
- A one-piece red culottes suit given by former Eastenders star Anita Dobson has still to be sold.
- The culottes are very full and have a comfortable, elasticated waistband.
- A new clippers/a garden shears/an old-fashioned curling tongs.
- A spectacle case/a trouser leg/a pyjama top.
- A compass shows you which direction is north.
- She drew her circle with a compass.
- A magnetic compass/magnetic compasses are necessary for navigation.

[N.B.: Plural nouns ending in -s are: *amends, arrears, belongings, clothes, conditions, congratulations, contents, credentials, dregs, dues, earnings, expenses, foundations, funds, goods, ground, headquarters, lodgings, looks, means, odds(=probability), outskirts, pains, particulars(=details) premises(=building), proceeds, refreshments, regards, remains, resources, riches, savings, surroundings, talks, thanks, troops(=soldiers), tropics, and valuables etc.*]

Concord with Bipartites: Bipartites/bipartite nouns are “two key groups of nouns ending in -s which refer to objects consisting of two conjoined parts, and invariably take plural agreement.” (Peters) Although they denote a single object, they are said to take formal concord, according to their final-s. They refer to two-sided tools/instruments for enhancing vision /with opposing arms and clothing especially for the lower body: *bellows, binoculars, goggles, nutcrackers, scissors, tongs; braces, briefs, jeans, pants, pajamas, shorts, trousers*, etc. They are plural in form but not in their meaning. Their singular forms are seen in advertising material e.g. *a shapely pant, high quality steel scissor*, etc. their singular form is used when they function as categorial modifier e.g. *pajama top, scissor blade*, etc. (See Before)

Concord with Quantifiers: A quantifier is a grammatical element which expresses an amount, number or quantity. A quantifier is “a phrase ending in ‘of’ which allows you to refer to a quantity of something without being precise about the exact amount” [Sinclair] They can function as pronouns or determiners. Quantifiers can be categorized into two types: primary and compound. **Primary quantifiers** are *all, many, enough, few, little*, etc. and **compound quantifiers** are *a bit, a lot, a couple*, etc. They combine with a following *of*-phrase to indicate quantity. Here is a list of quantifiers with *of* : all of, an amount of, another of, any of, a bit of, a little bit of, a couple of , a good deal of, a great deal of, a few of, a little of , a lot of, a good many of, a great many of, a number of, a quantity of, a majority of, the majority of, a minority of, the remainder of, the rest of, the whole of, heaps of, loads of, masses of, tons of, both of, certain of, each of, either of, enough of, few of, fewer of, less of, little of, lots of, many of, more of, most of, much of, neither of, none of, numbers of, one of, part of, plenty of, quantities of, several of, some of, total of , various of.

- All of them are friendly. [*all* is number transparent—the complement dictates the agreement with the verb.]
- All of the/his apples are rotten.
- All of the cake was eaten.
- All of the farm land is fertile.
- All of my family is/are present. [here *all* is used with a collective noun]
- All my family is/are present.
- Is this another of your schemes to make money?
- Another of the city’s many Indian restaurants is very clean.
- Are any of the paintings for sale?
- Is any of the salad for sale?
- Is any of the honey eaten?
- Are any of you going to the meeting?
- Any of your friends is/are interested in music.
- Both of them are honest.
- Both of these oranges are rotten.
- Certain of the payments were made.
- Certain of those present were unwilling to discuss the matter further.
- Each of us sees the world.
- Each of the apples is to be eaten.
- Each and every student has a textbook.
- Each of his examples was/were(sg/pl) out of context. [*Each* and *every* are subject quantifiers as in *each/every* student. When the quantified noun refers to a definite plural set, there can be problems since the quantifiers are grammatically singular, yet the set that they are modifying is notionally plural.
- Every one of these athletes run/runs(sg/pl) the mile in four minutes. [singular or plural agreement is correct---Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia, p.67]
- Each of you is questioned privately.
- Each of you are(pl) questioned privately. [far less frequent]
- Each of these were performed six times.

- Every one of us were happy to see him again.
- Every one of us is a hero.
- Has either of them called yet? / Have either of them called yet?
- Enough of the blue paint attracts me.
- There weren't enough of them to form a team.
- This is enough of a problem without you making it worse.
- That's enough of your cheek.
- Few of us are not willing.
- Fewer of their friends are reluctant to buy tickets.
- Half of these mangoes are rotten. [*half* is number transparent]
- Half of the meat was rotten
- Half of it is unfit to eat.
- Less of my time has been spent.
- There was less of a crowd at the match today than at last week's.
- Hundreds of soldiers arrived, but less of them have remained.
- Little of my valuable time is lost.
- Lots of their apples have been stolen.
- Lots of their farm land is fertile.
- Are there a lot of good players at your tennis club?
- There weren't a lot of choices.
- There are a lot of monuments and a lot of historic buildings in Rome.
- There were lots of people at the party.
- A lot of people were hurt.
- A lot of money was spent on it.
- Lots of people were hurt
- Lots of money was spent on it.
- *The book took a lot of years to write. [This sentence is incorrect because we use *many*, when we talk about years, days, weeks, etc.]
- Many of them have not come yet.
- Many of his friends and colleagues were shocked upon hearing of his sudden death.
- More of the missing climbers have been found
- More of the salted butter is needed.
- Most of our fruit is imported.
- Most of it is imported.
- Most of these people sing well.
- Most of what Ranjan told me wasn't true.
- Most of them are women.
- There are thousands of verbs in English and most (of them) are regular.
- Most of the information was useful. Some of it wasn't relevant.
- Most (PL) of them don't know. [*Most* can function as singular or plural.]
- Most (SG) of it is finished.
- The most I can hope for is a passing grade.
- Most of his writing is rubbish.
- The most this room will seat is 150.
- Most of England and Wales was/*were throughout the day.[were-incorrect]
- How much of this book is fact and how much is fiction?
- Unfortunately, not many of the photographers were there.
- Much of the day was taken up with classes.
- Neither of them has/have a car. [Neither (NOT none) is used when we talk about people or things.]
- Neither of my parents speaks/speak a foreign language. [Neither of and either of are followed by a plural noun or pronoun and a singular or plural verb. A plural verb is more informal]
- Neither of the birthday cards was suitable.
- Neither of my best friends was around.
- Neither of my sisters is married. (formal style & formal concord)

- Neither of my sisters are married (Informal Style & Proximity Concord)
- Neither of them were interested in going to university.
- Neither of these shirts is/are dry yet. [* Both of these shirts aren't dry yet. -Incorrect: We don't normally use *both (of)* + *not* to make a negative statement about two people or things]
- Another clue is even size and regular shape, neither of which is characteristic of Chincoteagues.
- The recent advance has been driven by news at two companies, neither of which is Hologic.
- But you have to take one of two alternatives neither of which is pleasant.
- It seems plausible that one of two things may happen, neither of which is socially desirable.
- In 1950 there were only two mega-cities of 8 million or more, neither of which was in the developing world.
- None of us speaks/speak English. [singular or plural verb]
- None of the work is done. [Singular verb. When we use none of with an uncountable noun, the verb is in the singular:]
- None of these pens works/work.
- We have three sons but none of them lives/live nearby.
- None of the trains is/are going to London. [When we use none of with a plural noun or pronoun, or a singular noun referring to a group of people or things, you can use either a singular or a plural verb. The singular form is used in a formal style in British English.]
- None of her family has/have been to college.
- None of that surprises me.
- Indeed, none of his novels is well shaped or well written.
- None of the products have been tested on animals and all the bottles are recyclable.
- None of us is/are able to escape the consequences of our actions. [We use none to talk about a group of three or more things or people. We use neither to talk about two things or people]
- None of us cares/care what happens to him.
- Numbers of students were present there.
- A number of issues were discussed. [We use a plural verb after 'a number of' and a singular verb after 'the number of']
- A number of fairies have/*has appeared. [plural concord]
- A large number of people have applied for the job.
- A number of (= some) problems have arisen.
- A number have rejected the proposal. [here the sentence is elliptical: the oblique may be the partitive *of the members* and the non-partitive *of members*.]
- The number of homeless people has increased dramatically.
- The total number of students has doubled in the last six years.
- The number of people is increasing.
- One of our number (= one of us) has been selected.
- One of our cats has vanished.
- Part of his life has been ruined.
- Part of the building was destroyed in the fire.
- Part of me feels sorry for him (= I feel a little sorry for him, but not very sorry).
- Part of the morning was spent brainstorming ideas.
- Part of the reason I'm interested in this is that my father was a vet.
- Part of why we read is to escape our immediate surroundings.
- We spent most of (NOT *most part of) the morning shopping.
- There is plenty of evidence to support her claims.
- There's plenty of room.
- There are plenty of opportunities for research.
- There's plenty for you to do.
- There are plenty more chairs in the next room.
- Heaps of money has/*have been spent[singular concord]
- Very large quantities of air were needed.
- Immense quantities of jewels were required.
- Several of his friends are not going to Puri.
- Several of the paintings were destroyed in the fire.

- Some of the music was weird.
- Some of his jokes were very rude.
- Some of the gossip was accurate.
- Some of his friends were honest.
- Some of the fish were a beautiful blue colour.
- If you want a biscuit, there are some in that tin.
- There is still some of that ice cream left.
- Various of apples are grown in Kashmir.
- A small amount of milk is needed.
- Large amounts of money are needed. [“The traditional distinction between amount and number is that amount is used with mass or uncountable nouns (the amount of paperwork; the amount of energy) and number with countable nouns (a number of songs; a number of days). Although sometimes objected to, the use of amount instead of number with countable nouns occurs in both speech and writing, especially when the noun can be considered as a unit or group (the amount of people present; the amount of weapons) or when it refers to money (the amount of dollars paid; the amount of pennies in the till).” Collins]
- A large amount of mistakes are perceived.
- A certain amount of time has already been spent on the project.
- There was a fair amount of traffic on the roads.
- The amount of reclaimed glass used in industry has doubled in the last five years.
- There's been any amount of research into the subject.
- The amount of time it took to finish the job was very frustrating.
- The amount of something is how much of it there is.
- A quantity of jewellery was taken during the burglary. [“Quantity is more formal than amount or number. A quantity of or quantities of can be followed by a countable noun or an uncountable noun. They are most commonly used with an adjective such as huge, big, large, small” -- Cambridge]
- A vast quantity of information is available on the Internet.
- Large quantities of money and expertise have been misdirected.
- Huge quantities of oil were spilling into the sea.
- An enormous quantity of chemical waste has been dumped in the river.
- A large quantity of cigarettes were found inside the shop.
- A large quantity of ammunition has been stolen.
- A large quantity of bananas were sold.
- A bit of cake was eaten by me.
- A smidgen of improvement /*improvements was perceived.
- There is a bit of both brown sugar and molasses.
- Here are some useful bits of information.
- Here's a bit of news that may interest you.
- There were bits of paper all over the floor.
- A little bit of brown sugar was taken by the patient.
- A couple of days has/have passed by.
- There is/are a couple of gloves in the drawer.
- The couple is/are very nice.
- The last couple of years has/have been difficult.
- The couple was/were married in 2022.
- A good deal of farm land was cultivated.
- A good deal of problems have to be solved.
- A good deal of research has been done on the subject.
- There is a deal of social activity now for the hunting season.
- So is a deal of subtlety in the more reflective parts of the love duet and the monologue.
- A great deal of farm land was not cultivated.
- A great deal of problems have to be solved.
- A few of the boys have passed the examination.
- A little of Ravi's farmland is fertile.
- A lot of his farm land was unproductive.

- A lot of their apples are not ripe.
- A good many of students/a great many of students were present there.
- There were a good many of people there
- There are still a good few empty seats.
- A number of people were absent.
- The number of students was 49.
- Shark numbers have dwindled as a result of hunting.
- Quite a considerable number of interviews are going on.
- There were a number of (= several) soldiers present at the rally.
- A large quantity of food was eaten.
- There is a quantity of information (=a lot of information)
- There are a large quantity of blood cells.
- The majority of people interviewed prefer TV to radio.
- The majority was/were in favour of banning smoking.
- The overwhelming majority of participants were men.
- The majority of the town's population are over 50.[The majority of can only refer to a number of things or people. When talking about an amount, most of should be used: Most of (not the majority of) the harvest was saved]
- The majority of patients are women. [We use a plural verb with the majority of, when it is followed by a plural noun]
- He sees several patients a day. The majority are women. [We use a plural verb with the majority on its own, when you are considering members of a group as individual people.]
- The majority is /are unwilling to listen to the views of the minority. [We usually use a singular verb with the majority, when considering people as a single group. But we, in British English, can also use a plural verb in this meaning.]
- In the election, the Labour majority was reduced to just 15 seats at the last election.
- The vast majority of our cheeses are made with pasteurised milk.
- The majority of the damage is easy to repair.
- A majority of people were present at the meeting.
- A minority of people have supported them.
- The majority of his work is fine.
- The majority of poetic analysis(sg) has(sg) determined salary increases. [when majority or minority are followed by an of-phrase, the proximity principle dictates the subject-verb agreement in the vast majority of cases. In other words, when the noun in the of-phrase is singular, singular agreement results and when it is plural, plural agreement results.]
- Only a small minority of human communication(sg) is (sg)mediated through the words used.
- The minority of buyers(pl) insist (pl) on a golf-course view.
- Most grade-three kids say that they like reading and the vast majority think(pl) they are good at. [when majority and minority are used as collective nouns, either singular or plural subject-verb agreement is possible depending on whether the speaker/writer is viewing the majority/minority in question as comprised of its many parts or a single entity.]
- Among other voters, a majority thinks(sg) that climate change is caused by people.
- Just because a minority of drivers(pl) abuse(pl) a privilege is no reason to get rid of the privilege.
- It rained the first day but the remainder of the trip was fine.
- Most of our employees work in New York; the remainder are in London.
- Only 5.9 per cent of the area is covered in trees. Most of the remainder is farmland.
- A quarter of finalists hoped to go travelling. The remainder were undecided about their plans.
- The remainder constitutes the interstitial fluid that surrounds each body cell.(SG)
- The remainder were largely due to sewage, industrial pollution or oil spillages.
- The remainder of the money was distributed.
- The first question was difficult, but the rest were pretty easy.
- I've got two bright students, but the rest are average.
- I'll keep a third of the money and the rest is for you.
- The *rest* of the paper is organized as follows.

- The rest of the money is for you. [We use a singular verb after the rest when referring to an uncountable noun]
- I've eaten some cheese – the rest is in the fridge.
- Two of the terrorists were captured and the rest were killed. [We use a plural verb after the rest when referring to a group of people or things]
- Half (of) the work is already finished.
- The whole of the performance was disappointing/The whole performance was disappointing from start to finish. [Here is a semantic difference between all and whole: Whole families (entire families) normally shared one room in the nineteenth century. All families (each and every family) normally shared one bedroom in the nineteenth century. —Cambridge]
- Early in the eleventh century the whole of England (NOT: * the whole England: the + whole +of + Proper noun) was conquered by the Vikings.
- The whole of the estate was lost.
- The whole of the morning was wasted trying to find the documents.
- That is, the whole of its nature or reality is at least adequately given by this description.
- The second half of the book is more exciting.
- The two halves of the city were reunited in 1990.
- Over a half of all accidents happen in the home.
- Half of them have come.
- Half of the cake was eaten.
- There's heaps of time before the plane leaves.
- There is a heap of time.
- There are heaps of opportunities.
- There were loads of people at the parade.
- There is loads of time to see.
- There were masses of people in town today
- There is masses of food/work.
- The mass of people have supported it.
- There is tons of time at his disposal.
- There are tons of people in the playground.
- A total of fifty students was/were present there. [here inherent plurality invites notional concord with a plural verb. And total expresses a notional unity and singular in form and this invites formal agreement (singular) with the verb.

[N.B.: The following nouns can be used without an *of* complement: *administration*, *army*, *band* (musical band), *board*, *class* (class at school or university), *clergy*, *couple* (a man and woman), *crew*, *enemy*, *family*, *government*, *intelligentsia*, *jury*, *party* (=a political party), *public*, *staff*, *team*, *union*, *university*, *woodwind*, etc. The following nouns can be used with an overt complement or an understood *of* complement: *band(group)*, *batch*, *bunch*, *class(classification)*, *couple (a set of two)*, *flock*, *group*, *herd*, *host*, *majority*, *minority*, *number*, *party (group)*, *rash*, *set*, etc. The two nouns which are for pragmatic reasons are normally restricted to the singular, with *the* as determiner are *clergy* and *intelligentsia*.]

Concord with Proper nouns and Proper names: Proper names and proper nouns denote distinct entities. Both are written with initial capital letters. There is a distinction between proper nouns and proper names. Proper names for persons are phrases consisting of unique or quasi-unique personal and family names (*Andrew Radford* , *Narendra Modi*, *Mao Tse-tung*, etc.) and include phrase-like units (e.g. *the United States*, *New York*, *the Daily Telegraph*, *the South Downs*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *the College of Nurses*, *State Bank of India*, *the College of Nurses*, etc.). Sometimes, the same proper name can refer to different persons but this is due to their respective social contexts and they also are proper names mostly found in any telephone directory (*John Smiths*, *Peter Whites*, *Bimal Agarwals*, etc.). Proper names for geographical features are phrases consisting of a common and proper noun (*Mount Everest*, *Cape Canavarel*, *Christmas Island*, *Yamuna River*, etc.). "Like personal proper names, they are notionally unique, even though they may be duplicated in other parts of the world –or even within the same country. There are in fact 11 (eleven) *River Avons* in different parts of the UK, but their individual localities give them distinct identities." (Peters) Proper names for institutions/institutes may be made up of common and proper nouns with determiners and prepositions or common nouns (*Department of Foreign affairs*, *The Times*, *The Times of India*, *National Portrait Gallery*,

Wells Fargo Bank, Christians Democrats, etc.). There are also proper names designating the titles of creative works with different clausal elements. (*Five Persons Point One, Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf*, etc.). Some personal names are more or less fixed and some may be modified in keeping with their syntactic or discoursal role. According to Huddleston and Pullum, there are two types of proper names: *strong* and *weak*. In their opinion, geographical names such as *New Zealand* and *Long island* are strong, in that they resist the use of the determiner, and geographical names such as *the Ukraine* and *the United States of America* are weak in that they contain the redundant determiner. This redundant determiner can be dropped along with other reductions (*Ukraine government sources, a United States submarine*, etc.) Proper names for rivers in English are also weak (*River Ganges, the River Ganges, Ganges River, the Ganges River, the Ganges*, etc.) Proper names for institutions are typically weak, since many have abbreviated forms (*Department of Foreign Affairs > Foreign Affairs* , *National Portrait Gallery > the Gallery/Gallery > the gallery*). It is to be noted here that the abbreviated form may be decapitalized after its first full appearance in the text when the abbreviated form is the head of the phrase rather than the descriptor or postmodifier. Proper names can take singular concord or plural concord. Proper nouns ending in -s may take singular The names of businesses (Lloyds, McDonalds, Oddbins, Woolworths) may take either singular or plural verb. According to Peters, commercial businesses, government institutions and special interest groups, where the plural verb implies corporate activity:

- Woolworths is/are showing a booming profit now.
- Glasgow Celtics is the outright winner this season.
- Foxtel have sold off some of their assets.
- The Red cross have expanded the Geneva office.
- The Ministry of Defence are on our side.
- The printers is [sg] near the traffic lights on Bridge Street. [a singular verb is found with words that refer to a collective establishment or operation.]

But proper nouns are single words and designate individual persons or places (e.g. *India, Elizabeth, England, Lloyds Bank, Woolworths, Glasgow Celtics*, etc.). Proper nouns can be used with a premodifier (*the modern India*) and function like an attributive adjective (*the Uruguay government*). If proper nouns refer to corporate bodies or national teams, they may take either singular agreement or plural agreement: formal agreement with the form of the name or notional agreement with the sense implied (the entity involves a number of people). Although the proper noun is singular, it may take plural agreement (here notional agreement). Sometimes it is seen that although the proper noun ending in -s, is plural, it may take singular agreement (here notional agreement). Examples:

- State Bank of India (the corporate entity) has decided to raise interest rates.
- State Bank of India (a group of authorised persons) have decided to raise interest rates.
- India (the entity-country) has decided to participate in the Olympic Games 2028.
- India (=the Indian cricketing team) have won the match.
- Lloyds Bank is/are poised to cut down interest rates.
- Lloyds Bank is/are poised to cut down interest rates.
- Woolworths in Australia has been selling petrol at some of its outlets.
- Glasgow Celtics is the outright winner this season.
- The College of Nurses has helped the flood-affected people lavishly. [singular formal agreement]
- The College of Nurses have helped the flood-affected people lavishly. [here plural notional agreement stressing the idea of multiple members of the college and works in combination with proximity agreement]

Concord & Number transparent: There are some quantifiers which are number transparent in that they allow the number of the second noun (noun after *of*) in the phrase to determine the number of the whole noun phrase. This second noun is called *the oblique*. The oblique can be *partitive* or *non-partitive*. These expressions can take either count nouns or uncountable nouns as their complement. When these expressions are used as the subject noun phrase, the complement determines the agreement with the verb. Examples:

- Dozens of mistakes are seen [in the phrase ‘dozens of mistakes, the second noun is a plural and select the plural noun *dozens*]
- * Dozens of work was/were done---Incorrect
- A lot of work was done.
- A lot of mistakes were perceived.
- A lot (of the money) was spent on travel (Q: where did he do with all the money?)
- A lot (of the protesters) were put behind the bar (Q: what happened to the protesters?)
- A lot of the students protested against the rude behaviour of the teacher. (a subset of the set relation: partitive)
- A lot of people gathered at the altar (absence of subset relation: non-partitive)
- Many of the students attended the show
- *Many of students attended the show. —Incorrect

The main number-transparent nouns are *all, bags, couple, heaps, lot, lots, loads, number, oodles, plenty, rest, remainder, stacks*:

- The rest of the work was not finished.
- The rest of the apples were not eaten.
- There are heaps of laughs.
- There is heaps of laughter.
- All of the rice/all the rice was eaten.
- All of the bags/all the bags were torn.
- Half of the rice /half the rice was eaten.
- Half of the bags /half the bags were torn.
- Plenty of butter is available.
- Plenty of friends are not available.
- A large number of students have attended the ceremony. [here *number* indicates an imprecise number in the number transparent sense.]
- The number of students is increasing. [here *number* indicates a precise number]
- Lots of money was spent on the project.
- Lots of people have contributed lavishly to the fund.
- Oodles of public money has been misappropriated.
- Oodles of quotations were seen in the paper.

It is to be noted that there are non-count quantificational nouns which select a plural oblique. Examples include *dozens, scores, tens, hundreds, thousands, millions, billions, zillions, lakhs/lakh* (PL):

- Dozens of mangoes were sold. (Head noun + Complement)
- Hundreds of mangoes were sold. (Head noun + Complement)
- Two dozen apples / *two dozens apples were sold. (Determiner + Head noun)
- Four hundred apples were rotten. (Determiner + Head noun)

When *dozens / hundreds* function as head noun, it is plural. But when *dozen/hundred* functions as a determiner, it is singular. These plural nouns are quantified and require *of*.

- *Dozens apples—Incorrect.
- A dozen of the apples—correct
- Five hundred of the apples—correct.
- *Five hundreds of apples/the apples---incorrect
- Fives of thousands of stars—correct [Head noun + Complement]
- Five thousand stars—correct
- Many thousands of stars —correct
- The thousands of stars—correct
- Those millions of people living in dire poverty. —correct.

Interrogative pronouns which are number transparent are *what* and *which*. But *who*(nominative) and *whom*(accusative) are marked for grammatical case. *Who* and *which* remain neutral in their grammatical number and so the verb that agrees with them takes its number from the noun phrase they refer to (Paters):

- Ranita who was brilliant succeeded in securing high marks.
- Her friends who were not brilliant failed the examination.
- What is your purpose? [the noun phrase functioning as the complement must determine the number agreement]
- What are their plans?
- Which is your car?
- Which are the cars you own?
- Who are you?
- Who am I to do such a thing?
- Who is the boy?
- Who's the money for?
- Who is that woman?

Concord with Pluralia tantum: See **Wiktionary** for a detailed list. A **plurale tantum** (Singular) [Plural: pluralia tantum] refers to a noun which is used only as a plural. "In traditional grammar this is the collective name for some or all of the various sets of nouns which always end in -s, but which refer to a single object or concept, e.g. *amends*, *arrears*, *belongings*, *congratulations*, *dues*, *funds*, *glasses*, *grounds*, *looks*, *means*, *premises*, *odds*, *remains*, *scissors*, *surroundings*, *trousers*. Some grammarians reserve it for aggregates or composites like *arrears*, *surroundings*; others apply it also to bipartites or other summation plurals. [Peters] Pluralia tantum are of three types:

- a) words for tools, articles of clothing, etc. that consists of two parts e.g. *trousers*, *binoculars*, etc.
 - b) words which are never singular e.g. *riches*, *clothes*, *thanks*, etc.
 - c) words which are said to have both plural and singular forms but with a difference in meaning e.g. *arm* (our organ)/*arms*(weapons), *regards* (best wishes)/*regard*(respect), etc.
- Robert is a man of means (= a rich man: here *means* means the money that a person has)
 - Email is a highly effective means (=a system) of communication.

Some pluralia tantum can take singular concord: *means*, *grounds*, *barracks*, *headquarters*, *drycleaners*, *butchers*, *printers*, etc. *Barracks*, *headquarters* refer to composite premises and *drycleaners*, *butchers*, *printers* refer to single premises where several processes are carried out. Here the final -s is a collective suffix rather than a genitive or plural suffix.

- The drycleaners is/are situated beside the station.
- The printers is/are on the right-hand side.
- The drycleaners is/are on the left-hand side.

[N.B.: There are some nouns after which an apostrophe s is placed and they refer to a shop. Examples: *baker's*, *barber's*, *butcher's*, *chemist's*, *dentist's*, *doctor's*, *fishmonger's*, *florist's*, *greengrocer's*, *grocer's*, *hairdresser's*, *ironmonger's*, *jeweller's*, *newsagent's*, *optician's*, *stationer's*, *tobacconist's*, *travel agent's*. For example, *a baker's* means a shop that sells bread and cakes. It is to be noted that the plural of *baker's* is *bakers/*bakers*'. A **singular tantum** (singular; Plural: **singularia tantum**) is a word which has only a singular form. "Such nouns may refer to a unique singular object (essentially a proper noun), but more often than not, they refer to uncountable nouns, either mass nouns (referring to a substance that cannot be counted as distinct objects, such as 'milk') or collective nouns (referring to objects that may in principle be counted but are referred to as one, such as 'popcorn'... In English, such words are almost always mass nouns. Some uncountable nouns can be alternatively used as count nouns when meaning "a type of", and the plural means "more than one type of". For example, *strength* is uncountable in *Strength is power*, but it can be used as a countable noun to mean an instance of [a kind of] strength, as in *My strengths are in physics and chemistry*. Some words, especially proper nouns such as the name of an individual, are nearly always in the singular form because there is only one example of what that noun means." (Wikipedia):For a complete list of pluralia tantum see Wikipedia.]

Concord between determiners and their noun heads: There are certain determiners which agree with their noun heads but there are exceptions to this:

- This pen BUT these pens.
- That pen BUT those pens.
- *That* five dollars(here *that* is used with plural) ; those five dollars
- *This* last two weeks(here *this* is used with plural) ; these last two weeks
- *Another* three days
- '*Finished?*' '*No, I've got another three questions to do.*'
- *We've still got another* (= a further) *forty miles to go.*
- *Would you like another drink?*
- Another five per cent
- A happy four months[plural]
- Every few miles[plural]
- Each ten ounces[plural]
- *The buses go every 10 minutes.*
- A good many friends
- A few pens

Concord with some numerical expressions/measure expressions/phrases: According to Peters, freshly formulated numerical phrases are subject to variable agreement, according to whether the plural number of the head noun dictates plural agreement or the whole noun phrase is taken to indicate a set quantity, with singular agreement. We use singular determiners, verbs and pronouns, with expressions of quantities and amounts, even if the noun is plural.

- Two and two is/are four.
- Ten times five is fifty/Ten fives is fifty.
- That forty pounds is nothing.[singular determiner with plural noun]
- We have got *six cans of milk* but *that* is not sufficient.
- More than ten inches of snow has fallen on the city of London.
- Four days in Puri was/were enough for us.
- Ten tonnes of rice is/are less than they hoped for.
- Forty dollars have/has bought me a good meal.
- Those ten days they spent in New Delhi was amazing. [singular]
- Forty dollars is a sufficient amount. [singular]
- Six miles is rather more than I want to walk this afternoon. [singular]
- Ten eggs is /*are plenty. [singular]
- Ten dollars is all that I have left.[singular: that amount is...]
- Fifteen years represents a long period of his life.[singular: that period is...]
- Four miles is as far as they can walk.[singular: that distance is...]
- Three fourths of the area is under water. [singular: that area is ...]
- Forty people means a huge party.[singular: that number of people means...]
- Thirty dollars buys you a good meal[sg]
- Ten miles(=a distance of ten miles) is too far a walk.
- Thirty pounds(=a sum of thirty pounds) is a reasonable price.
- Three quarters of a potato is water.[sg]

Concord with *more than* and *many a* : We use a plural after *more than* plus plural number. We use a singular noun after *more than one*. *Many* precedes plural nouns and naturally the plural noun or noun phrase take a plural verb. But *many a* precedes a singular count noun:

- More than 20 books[pl] were written by the author. [the head noun is *books* which is plural and hence plural concord]
- More than a thousand inhabitants have signed the proposal.[the head noun is *inhabitants* which is plural and hence plural concord]

- More than one member[sg] has protested[the head noun is *member* which is singular and hence singular concord]
- Many a member has protested[the head noun is *member* which is singular and hence singular concord: =many members have protested]
- More members than one have protested against the proposal. [the head noun is *members* which is plural and hence plural concord]

Concord with proportional phrases/expressions: Proportional phrases like *one in five* or *one out of five*, when used as the subject noun phrase can take singular or plural concord. They can take singular agreement (formal agreement) when *one* is treated as the head of the noun phrase. But they can take plural agreement (notional agreement) because the phrase does not refer to a single case but to a much larger percentage of the countable nouns. Examples:

- Only one in forty citizens is/are doing these jobs.
- Only one out of forty citizens is/are doing these jobs.
- One of my friends lives in Brighton. (only singular)
- One place I'd really like to visit is Bali. (only singular)
- One student in a hundred takes/*take drugs[singular: here the head is singular -*student*.]
- One student out of a hundred takes/*take drugs[singular]
- In a hundred students, only one takes/*take drugs[singular: here the head is singular—*one*.]
- Out of a hundred students, only one takes/*take drugs[singular]
- One in a hundred students takes/take drugs. [singular /plural: here the head is *students* which is plural. Here the singular concord is motivated by the presence of *one*.]
- One out of a hundred students takes/take drugs. [singular /plural]
- One in five were scared of other prisoners.[plural]
- One in five pairs of socks sold in Britain is[singular] made by Sherwood. —Prof Biber et al, page 185. Plural concord is predominant with expressions of the type *one in /out of* + numeral, though singular forms are used. In these expressions the reference is to a group. Singular concord is used sometimes because of the strong pull of *one* in the direction of the singular]

[N.B.: *One* as a determiner can be used to emphasize an adjective : *His mother is one* (= a very) *generous woman*. *That's one* (= a very) *big ice cream cone you have there*. *It was one hell of a* (= a very great) *shock to find out I'd lost my job*.]

- There are one or two things to sort out before I leave.
- There have been one or two complaints.
- One of them has gone.
- One in four children are/is engaged in the work.
- More than one in four children are/is engaged in the work.

In the syntactic constructions with *one of those/that/who/which* operating as the subject noun phrase, we find singular and plural concord. Here the question of singular or plural agreement in each case reflects whether the speaker/writer is projecting a view of the one successful candidate/pot or the many of that type. Formal concord (here singular agreement) is used and this would anticipate further discussion of the one candidate/pot, whereas the use of notional agreement (here plural agreement) suggests that the writer/speaker is profiling a whole group of successful candidates /pots that fit the description. In other words, in the case of formal concord, the relative clause modifies *one* but in the case of notional agreement, the relative clause modifies *those/those girls*.

- Aditya is one of those who have/has cracked the NEET successfully.
- Kaushiki is one of those girls who has/have scored good marks.
- This pot is one of those which was/were bought by me.

Concord may depend on the generality or uniqueness of the subject noun phrase in *one-of* constructions. If the subject noun phrase denotes generality, it takes singular concord and if the subject noun phrase denotes uniqueness, it takes plural concord.

- Charlatanry is one of the many words in English that **are** of French origin. [=Of many words in English that **are** of French origin, charlatanry is one---Quirk et al.]
- Charlatanry is one of the common vices that **is** particularly contemptible. [of the common vices, charlatanry is one that **is** particularly contemptible]

Concord with fractions & percentages: Fractions and percentages take a singular verb inflection when modifying a noncount noun and the plural inflection when they modify a plural noun. Either the singular or the plural verb inflection may be used when they modify a collective noun, depending on the speaker's meaning. (Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia, p64):

- One half of the toxic waste(noncount) has(sg) been carried to the place.
- Fifty percent of the toxic waste(noncount) has(sg) been carried to the place.
- Two thirds of the students(pl) are (pl)satisfied with the class.
- Sixty-six percent of the students(pl) are(pl) satisfied with the class.
- One tenth of the population(collective) of Egypt is/are Christians.
- Most grade-three kids say that they like reading and the vast majority think[pl] they are good at it.[Either singular or plural subject-verb agreement is possible depending on the speaker/writer is viewing the *majority/minority* in question as comprised of its many parts or as a single entity.]
- Among other voters, a majority thinks(sg) that climate change is caused by people.

Concord with existential *there*: The notional subject in the *there*-construction determines the number of the verb phrase. In everyday conversation, the verb is regularly contracted, attached to the preceding *there* and takes a singular form of *be* , though the notional subject is plural. According to Prof Biber et al, because of the contraction, *there's* tends to behave as a single invariable unit for the purpose of speech processing (psycholinguistics). The connection is far less close with *there was*, which is not reduced to a single syllable in speech and is not contracted in writing. It is to be noted that *there's* behaves like *here's*, *where's* and *how's*.

- There was no cup on the table.
- There were many houses on either side of the road.
- There remains the problem of finance.
- There's only four days left.
- There's someone on the phone for you.
- There's (= there are) lives at stake and we can't afford to take any risks.
- There were loads of people waiting outside the post office.
- There's three other people who are still to come.
- There are three other people who are still to come.
- There's lots of cars in the car park.
- There's nothing in this room; there's no bed, and not a single shelf.
- There's no way we can afford to buy a house at the moment.
- Ah, there's the book I've been looking for.
- There is where I disagree with you.
- Well if he would have come down here that night or that day—when there was[singular] three cars[plural] in the drive. [singular past tense verb forms are rarely followed by plural noun phrases]
- There is no way to know when he'll be home.
- There's no point in arguing about it.
- There's still a lot for us to do.
- Here's your socks.
- Oh here's some better prices.
- Where's your books?
- How's mum and dad?
- How's things?
- There was(singular) a huge cake in the dining room , and a band playing outside[notional subject is plural. A singular form of be is often followed by coordinated noun phrases in written registers----- Prof Biber. We find proximity concord: where a singular noun phrase follows immediately after *be* , singular concord is the more frequent choice in speech and writing.]

- There was (singular)no shrug and not much of a smile. [plural notional subject]

Concord with *IT* in the subject position: The rule is that the singular verb follows it an impersonal pronoun. It is a dummy/empty/artificial subject. It is non referential.

- Was it you who put these books on my desk?
- It's ten past twelve.
- It's our anniversary.
- It's two miles to the beach.
- It's a long time since they left.
- It's no use shouting.
- It appears that the two leaders are holding secret talks.
- I find it strange that she doesn't want to go.
- Does it matter what colour it is?
- It's Jim who's the clever one.
- It's Spain that they're going to, not Portugal.
- It was/*were three weeks later that he heard the news.
- It's over 200 miles from London to Manchester.
- It's three years since I last saw her.
- It's really these countries that have the worst environmental records.
- It is peace and quiet which I long for.

Concord with names of countries, organizations, titles, quotations: If names of countries are plural, they take singular number and singular pronouns:

- The Unites States is a democratic country and is trying to improve its financial condition.

The title of a book, film, etc is counted as singular even though it is a plural phrase:

- 'Porgy and Bess' has (The opera has) recently been revived on Broadway,
- 'Great Expectations' is (The novel is) to be made into a film again.

Plural titles of collections of stories, poems, etc may be viewed as either singular (a collection) or plural (individual works):

- *Lamb's Tales* was/were my first introduction to Shakespeare's plays.
- Solidated Fruitgrowers has bought several stores.

If an expression is mentioned as such rather than used in the normal way, it is always singular:

- *Children* is(sg) (The word is) an irregular plural',
- *My apologies* was(sg) (The expression was) all he could say.

Concord with proportional expressions with *per cent*(BrE)/*percent*(AmE): The term percent is number transparent and when it operates as subject, the complement dictates the agreement with the verb. Singular concord is used with reference to uncountable nouns and singular pronouns, and plural concord is used with reference to plural nouns and pronouns. The following nouns follow this rule—*per cent*, *half*, *a third*, *two thirds*, *a/the majority*, *the bulk* and *the rest* :

- One per cent of students *takes/take drugs. [plural concord: the noun *per cent* is number transparent. The head of the oblique is plural-*students*.]
- One per cent of the electorate takes/take drugs. [singular/plural concord: the head is *electorate*, which is a collective noun used as a singular or a plural noun]
- One per cent of the cheese was/* were contaminated.[singular concord: the head is cheese which is singular.]
- The electorate is/are divided on this issue.

- The party's electorate basically resembles the complexion of society.
- A large *percent* of their income is used to pay rent.[singular concord]
- Bill Parcells once told me many years ago that 80 percent of games are lost and not won.
- Two thirds of foreign trade is within the area.[singular]
- 20 to 40 per cent of the voters are undecided.[plural]
- Twenty-two per cent of corals over the entire reef are dead.[plural]
- Two thirds of the population live in the poorer south.[plural]
- One third of the world's population consumes/consume two thirds of the world's resources.[singular/plural concord]
- The general population was/were against the measures.
- Over a third (=each of three equal parts of something) of sales were made over the internet.
- A third of these jobs are held by women.
- Two-thirds of the profits are given to charities. [plural]
- The general, unable to control his irritation, will launch his men to the assault like swarming ants, with the result that one-third of his men are slain, while the town still remains untaken. [plural]
- One third of the water was not used. [singular]
- Over half of the children live in one-parent families. [plural. We use *one and a half*, *two and a half* etc. we must not use *one and half ,*two and half. The phrases *one and a half*, *two and a half* etc are followed by a plural noun: *We were there for one and a half days*.
- If you look at our members, at least half are women. [plural]
- Half of the food/*the half food/half the food was wasted. [singular]
- It was half the size of the one he had just left, he noticed, unusually observant.
- The bulk of the population lives in cities. [singular]
- The great bulk of the work has now been done. [singular]
- The bulk of the text is essentially a review of these original documents.
- The vast bulk of imports and exports are carried by sea.
- The bulk of the proceeds are to be used to cut its borrowings.
- The bulk of the crop is dried.
- The first question was difficult, but the rest were pretty easy.
- The rest of it is no secret.
- The rest of the guests have looked at me.
- The second group of books is those written by botanists. [singular concord but plural subject complement]
- The students each have to take the examination. [when *each* follows a plural subject, the verb is plural]

Concord with *any*, *none*, *either* and *neither* as fused determiner- heads: When any and none have a singular non-count noun phrase as oblique partitive, they take singular verbs. But when they quantify over a plural set, they can take singular or plural verbs:

- Any of your salad has not been eaten by you.
- We need some more paint; there isn't any left.
- Is there any of that lemon cake left?
- There was hardly any food left by the time we got there.
- No, there's some margarine but there isn't any butter.
- None of the work was done.
- None of the trains is/are going to London.
- None of them was/were honest.
- None of her family has/have been to college.
- Please let me know if any of the texts is/are available. [singular or plural concord]
- None of the mistakes was/were serious. [singular or plural concord]
- There are two types of qualification—either is acceptable.
- If either were killed, delicate negotiations would be seriously disrupted. (Collins Dictionary)
- Either is acceptable.
- Has either of them called yet?
- Have either of them called yet?

Both singular and plural concord is found with *either* and *neither*:

- Either of them/us/you is allowed to enter the house.
- Either of you linguists think[pl] of me.
- Neither of the things is of any help.
- Neither of us believe[pl] in innocence.
- All this/*these is very boring.

According to Carter, *either of* and *neither of* are used in two ways. Singular concord is more traditional and formal, treating *either/neither* as referring to one of two individual entities. Plural concord sees *either/neither* as implying a pair of entities, therefore greater than one.

- Either of them[pl] are[pl] welcome.
- Neither of them[pl] are[pl] welcome.
- Neither of the events happens[sg]
- None of them[pl] have[pl] been questioned. [*none* is singular but notional concord prompts plural verb]
- There were glasses of champagne and cigars, but not many of either were consumed.
- Have either of you rented before?
- Either is good;
- Either of these books is useful.
- Has either of them called yet?
- Have either of them called yet?
- Either of you play[pl] golf.
- No one except his own supporters[pl] agree[pl] with him.[proximity concord]
- I doubt either of them is/are coming.
- Neither of them has/have replied.
- None of them are happy.
- Either of the girls are happy.
- Have/has either of your parents ever suffered from pneumonia?
- If either of you wishes[sg] to go you may leave early.[S. G. McKASKILL page 45]

Concord with demonstrative pronouns: Demonstrative pronouns marked for number (singular, plural) must agree with their antecedents. When they function as determiners, they must agree in number with the noun they pre-modify. Examples:

- I must choose one car and *this* (referring to the car) is it.[demonstrative pronoun]
- The big chairs are what we ordered, not those (referring to chairs).[demonstrative pronoun]
- This car/*cars was bought by us in 2002. [determiner: *car* is singular]
- Those flowers/*flower are/*is not selected. [determiner: *flowers* is plural]

Concord with relative/interrogative pronouns: In English relative or interrogative (*wh-*) pronouns are marked for gender when their antecedent is human or quasi-human or nonhuman or neuter. *Who* or *whom* have a human/quasi-human antecedent whereas *which* has the nonhuman or neuter antecedent. *Who* and *which* are neutral in their grammatical number and so the verb that agrees with them takes its number from the noun or noun phrase they refer to. Examples:

- These are the girls (human antecedent) who will help me out of the crisis.
- This is the car (neuter antecedent) which I bought at the auction.
- This is the girl who is going with me to Delhi.
- They are the colleagues who are going with me to Delhi.

It is to be noted here that *which* and *what* are number transparent. The complementary noun phrase determines the number agreement. The interrogative pronouns *who* and *what* take the default value of singular. Examples:

- What is your next plan?[singular concord]
- What is your name? [singular concord]
- What are your plans? [plural concord]
- What are your names? [plural concord]
- Which is you flat? [singular concord]
- Which are the flats you have recently bought? [plural concord]
- Who wants more pens? [singular concord: here the default singular allows for either singular or plural answers]
- What remains to be done? [singular concord: here the default singular allows for either singular or plural answers]
- Which (of these) is/are yours? [singular/plural concord: here the number of the verb depends on the answer which is presupposed to be singular or plural]
- What are going to be the deciding factors? [plural concord: here the default singular value of *what* is overridden because the answer is presupposed to be plural and due to the plural predicative complement *the deciding factors*]
- Who have not given you the documents? [plural concord: here the default singular value of *who* is overridden because the answer is presupposed to be plural]
- Who have hurt themselves in the match?
- What have pointed ears and long tails?
- Which of you is going to take part in the seminar?[sg—which one]
- Which of you are going to take part in the seminar?[pl---which ones]

Concord with Fused Relatives clauses/Nominal relative clauses:

- What the garden needed most was more rain. [singular]
- What money remains is in the bank. [singular concord in fused clause and singular concord in matrix clause: here *what* is a determiner to the head noun *money*. The singular head noun determines the number of the verb.]
- What errors were made were minor. [plural concord in fused clauses and plural concord in matrix clause: here *what* is a determiner to the head noun *errors*. The plural head noun determines the number of the verb]
- What amuses you does not necessarily amuse everybody else. [singular concord in the two clauses. Here *what* is a pronoun. The pronoun has the default value singular]
- What she says amuses me. [both clauses with singular concord]
- What he bought has/*have all been broken. [incorrect as the pronoun has the default value singular. *All* as a quantifying adjunct indicates plurality. In other words, he bought a plurality of things.]
- What you need is a good meal.
- What we need to do is make a list of useful phone numbers. [singular concord: the thing we need to do]
- What precisely triggered off yesterday's riot is still unclear. [singular concord]
- What I wanted, more than anything, was a few days' rest. [singular concord]
- What she does possess is the ability to get straight to the core of a problem. [singular concord]
- What you said was /*were unforgettable. [singular concord]
- What is your name? BUT what are your plans?
- What's the matter with you?
- He absented himself from the party for what were very sound reasons. [the predicative is plural]
- They have handed over to the police what appear (plural concord) to be forged bank notes. [plural concord]
- What appeared to be forged bank notes were scattered on the floor. [plural concord]
- What we need are managers with new ideas and the will to apply them. [plural concord]
- What is (singular concord) needed are (plural concord) managers with new ideas and the will to apply them.

- What are (plural concord) needed are (plural concord) managers with new ideas and the will to apply them.
- What it does not convey are[plural] the undulations.
- What is needed are[plural] effective regulators.
- What were once human dwellings are now nothing but piles of rubble.
- What she needs is/are friends.
- What we need most of all are some really new ideas. [here we find a longer plural complement and *what* is a long way from the verb.]
- What appears(sg) to be an elephant(sg) is interesting.
- What appear(pl) to be elephants(pl) are interesting. [here *what* represents *those things which*]

The use of a singular or a plural verb with *what* depends on the meaning:

- What disturbs the council is the hostile attitude of many citizens towards the police (The thing that disturbs the council is).
- They live in what were once army barracks (in places that were once army barracks).
- What they do is no concern of mine (Anything they do is).

Whatever as a pronoun is always singular. But *what* and *whatever* may be used before a plural noun:

- You may eat whatever pleases you (anything that pleases you).
- You may eat what/whatever foods please you.
- Your statistics are inaccurate (Your collection of quantified data).
- The dominoes are on the floor (The individual pieces are).

[N.B.: *What* as a pronoun is said to have the default value singular. When the relativised phrase or the whole fused relative construction is predicand to a plural noun phrase in predicative complement function, it indicates plurality. According to Huddleston & Pullum, where a plural predicative in the matrix (main clause) results in a plural override in that clause, there may or may not be a matching override in the subordinate clause. Here the default singular is retained. Where the plural predicative that motivates the plural verb is in the matrix clause, the override is optional. In other words, are could be replaced by is. But when the plural predicative is in the subordinate clause, matters are not so clear-cut:

- What we need is managers with new ideas and the will to apply them.
- What is (singular concord) needed is (singular concord) managers with new ideas and the will to apply them.
- What are needed is managers with new ideas and the will to apply them.
- They have handed over to the police what appears (singular concord) to be forged bank notes.
- He absented himself from the party for what were/*was very sound reasons. [singular concord is not possible]
- What appeared to be forged bank notes were/*was scattered on the floor. [singular concord is not possible].

Concord with indefinite pronouns and distributive pronouns: Indefinite pronouns reference a nonspecific set of possibilities and include *one, anybody, anyone, anything, somebody, someone, something, everywhere, somewhere* and distributive pronouns include *everybody, everyone, everything, nobody, no one, nothing*. Most **Quantifying pronouns** are followed by *of* and a definite noun phrase and they include *all (of), another(of), some (of), both (of), each (of), either (of), neither (of), many (of), most (of), much (of), enough (of), any (of), much (of), several (of), none (of), little(of), a little (of), few (of), a few (of)*. Quantifying pronouns can stand alone as a noun phrase [as in “That’s *all*”, “I will eat *some* (some of the steak)”]. Indefinite and distributive pronouns take a singular verb in formal agreement with the singular form of the second component(-body/-one/-thing) and they take third person plural pronoun or determiner. As far as pronouns and possessive adjectives with *someone, somebody, anyone, anybody, no one, nobody, everyone, everybody* are concerned, as these expressions have a singular meaning, they take singular concord and personal pronouns and possessive adjectives should be logically *he/she, him/her, his/her* and in colloquial English plural forms can be used. And *it* is used with *something, anything* and *nothing*. According to Peters, the use of the plural pronoun (*their/they*) is notional agreement, in keeping with the distributive meaning of the subject (*everyone,*

anybody) and it also helps to avoid the cumbersome *his* or *her*, *he* or *she*, and satisfies the need for a gender-free pronoun. Indefinite pronouns like *any* and *none* operating as the head of a noun phrase (subject noun phrase) can be used with singular or plural agreement. Here plural agreement reflects the notional plurality of the whole noun phrase, which is fed by the distributive sense of the pronoun. Examples:

- One ought to respect one's parents.
- If any of you gets/get into trouble, just call for help.
- Any of the books he wrote is worth reading.
- Any of the books he wrote are worth reading.
- None of the answers was correct. /* Each of the answers was not correct. [*each* cannot be used in negative clauses]
- None of his critics seems to understand his purpose.
- None of his critics seem to understand his purpose.
- None of these pens works/work.
- None of the work was done. [When we use *none of* with an uncountable noun, the verb is in the singular. When you use *none of* with a plural noun or pronoun, or a singular noun referring to a group of people or things, you can use either a singular or a plural verb. The singular form is used in a formal style in British English]
- None of the trains is/are going to London.
- None of her family has/have been to college.
- Each boy is issued with his own locker. [we usually use *his*, *her*, *himself*, or *herself* after *each*]
- Each of them tried it for herself.
- Each individual has a right to express their views. [We can use *they*, *them*, *their*, etc. when you do not want to say whether people are male or female]
- Each member of the community should take pride in their local environment.
- Each one of the passport counters has been closed. [when *each one of* functions as the subject noun phrase, the verb is singular]
- One of my children has got the first prize.
- Anyone foolish enough to believe in horoscopes needs a brain transplant.
- Is anyone home?
- It's not a job for anyone who is slow with numbers.
- Has anyone ignored their duty?
- Everyone will recognise themselves or somebody else in the song.
- Someone's left their bag behind.
- It's time for someone new (= a new person) to take over.
- We need to find somewhere to live.
- Something went wrong, didn't it?
- Has anyone left their luggage on the train?
- No one did the work, did they?
- Everybody has a team leader in charge of him or her. [When we want to refer back to everyone or everybody and we don't know if everyone is male or female, we use *him* or *her* and *his* or *her*. In informal styles, we use plural pronouns /determiner *they*, *their* and *them*:
- Not everyone has his or her own desk.
- Everyone has to climb to the top. When they get to the top, they have to blow their whistle. (more informal)
- Has everyone got their coats? (more informal)
- We couldn't get a seat. Everywhere was so crowded.
- Everyone has brought their partner to the party.
- Would everyone who wishes to attend the dinner let me know by Friday afternoon?
- Everyone has their own ideas about the best way to bring up children.
- Everyone knows who stole it, but they're all afraid to tell anyone.

The pronouns which can take singular or plural agreement are *each* *either* and *neither*. As Peters notes, although they select one of a pair of items, they imply the presence of both, and thus seem to invite notional agreement in the plural and this is especially so for *neither* because it deselects both members of the pair. In such syntactic constructions, we find an element of proximity agreement -the effect of the adjacent plural noun which postmodifies the indefinite pronoun. Examples:

- Each of them is correct. [formal speaking]
- Each of these people has some useful talent or experience. [each + of + plural noun > singular verb]
- Each of the students has scored good marks. [formal speaking]
- Each of the groups have performed well [informal speaking]
- Has either of them called yet? [formal speech: singular verb]
- Have either of them called yet? [informal speech: plural verb]
- Neither of those suggestions appeal to me [plural verb]
- Neither of the answers is right. [formal speech/writing: singular verb]
- Neither of the answers are right. [informal speech and writing: plural verb]
- But you have to take one of two alternatives neither of which is pleasant.[with *neither of which* the verb is always singular]
- It seems plausible that one of two things may happen, neither of which is socially desirable.

Concord between Predicatives and Predicands: The term *predicand* refers to the phrase of which something is predicated. The general rule is that the predicand as subject or object must agree with the predicative in number. Where the predicand as subject/object is singular, the predicative must be singular and where the predicand as subject/object is plural, the predicative must be plural. Semantic congruence is more important than formal or grammatical agreement. Examples:

- A serious problem in the garden is wasps.
- My brother(predicand) is a teacher/*teachers(predicative). [both are singular]
- My sisters are teachers/*a teacher[both are plural]
- Mr Sengupta considered his friend(predicand) a complete fool/*complete fools(predicative)[both are singular: here the predicative is a complement of the verb]
- Mr Sengupta considered his friends complete fools/*a complete fool.[both are plural]
- As a teacher(predicative) my friend(predicand) teaches his students well. [here the predicative is within the *as* phrase adjunct]

[N.B.: We may find that the relationship between predicative and predicand is different from that between subject and verb (predicator). There is no person agreement between predicative and predicand.:

- I am a teacher who studies/*study hard.
- It is I who am master now.
- You are someone who has/*have stolen the letter.
- The one who is causing all the trouble is you.

We also find that there is no gender agreement between predicative and predicand. But we also find examples where we find gender matching between the predicative and the predicand:

- Your friend is a problem which /*who we will solve.
- The dean is an obstacle which/*who I did not foresee.
- The house is a shambles *which* is going to take days to sort out.[*shambles* is predicated of non-human entities]
- The government are a shambles *who* do not deserve to be in power. [here *shambles* is a human collective noun.]
- The elder daughter is a teacher who is dedicated to her/*his students.
- The elder son is a teacher who is dedicated to his/*her students.

[N.B.: There are found copious examples where there is no agreement of grammatical number between predicative and predicand. We find specifying and ascriptive uses of *be* in copular clauses. Specifying/identifying *be* is the verb *be* when “it is used in a clause whose subject-related predicative complement identifies someone or something” (Chalker et al). The syntactic construction with specifying *be* is reversible. *Ascriptive* means attributing a property to a person or entity. Ascriptive/descriptive/characterizational *be* is the verb *be* which is elaborated with a state (a fool/foolish) and by dint of which a property is attributed to a person or an entity. Ascriptive complements are those that describe or characterise the subject. Examples:

- The man on the bus is my neighbour/Anil. [specifying *be*]
- John is foolish/a foolish man. [ascriptive *be* + adjective phrase/non-referential noun phrase]
- The only thing(sg) we need now is some new curtains(pl).[specifying *be*]
- Some new curtains(pl) are the only thing(sg) we need now.[specifying *be*]
- The major asset of the team(sg) are its world-class opening bowlers(pl).[specifying *be*]
- Its world-class opening bowlers(pl) are the major asset of the team(sg).[specifying *be*]
- The Morning Star and the Evening Star(pl) are both Venus(Sg).[specifying *be*]
- *The only person who helped me in my crisis was my friends[incorrect—a single person cannot be identified with two persons.]
- *The two people who complained most were my parents and my uncle[incorrect—two persons cannot be identified with three persons.]
- It was(sg) peace and quiet that he wanted most.
- What you are, my boy, is too big for your boots.
- What he wants is unobtainable/*Unobtainable is what he wants.
- Her fourth novel was even better.
- Even better was her fourth novel.
- Even better were her next three novels.
- What I asked you was whether she had seen him.
- What I regretted was that she had seen him/* whether she had seen him.
- Our friends(pl) are a nuisance(sg). [non-distributive]
- Our friends are nuisances. [distributive]
- The people(pl) who live out there are a minority cult group(sg).
- The accidents(pl) were the result of a power failure(sg).
- These results(pl) were something(sg) to be proud of.
- His PhD thesis(sg) was simply four unrelated articles(pl) collected together.
- This gadget(sg) is five different tools(pl) in one.
- His sons are a pest.[non-distributive: the set of his sons as a whole is a pest]
- His sons are pests.[distributive]
- *These rooms are shambles.[incorrect as *shambles* has no plural form and cannot be used distributively.]
- Ann’s stamps are a superb collection of rare issues.
- Ann’s stamps are superb collections of *rare* issues.
- *That stamp is a superb collection of rare issues. [incorrect because an individual entity cannot have a collective property ascribed to it.]
- Anima is a twin. [the term *twin* can express a collective or a non-collective property]
- Mina and Rima are twins.

[N.B.: There are a few nouns which can be ascribed to individual entities and collectively to a set: *delight*, *disgrace*, *embarrassment*, *godsend*, *mess*, *nuisance*, *obstacle*, *pest*, *pigsty*, *problem*, and *tip*

- The baby was a constant delight.
- The old lady's reminiscences were a continual delight to Constance.
- The book is a delight to look at and read.
- The books are a delight.
- The books are really delights.
- Your homework is an absolute disgrace.
- The filthy streets are a disgrace to the town.
- The episode was a huge embarrassment for all concerned.
- The episodes were a huge embarrassment for all concerned.

- The allegations have been an acute embarrassment (=serious and severe embarrassment) to the prime minister.
- But the meteorites were a potential embarrassment to the purest forms of uniformitarianism.
- Those quick and healthy recipes were a godsend to busy working parents.
- The good weather has been a real godsend for construction companies.
- The welfare system in this country is a mess.
- The attitude of the unions is a serious obstacle.
- The huge distances involved were an obstacle to communication between villages.
- The rooms are a pigsty.
- Unemployment is a very real problem for graduates now.
- Our friend(sg) is a nuisance(sg).
- Our friends(pl) are a nuisance(sg). [non-distributive]
- Our friends(pl) are nuisances(pl). [distributive]

In English the verb usually agrees with the subject of the sentence, not with the subject complement. But if the subject is located far away from the verb, the verb sometimes agrees with the subject complement (Swan). This is found when the subject is a relative what-clause, especially the complement is long:

- The most interesting thing on radio and television last weekend without any doubt was/were the tennis championships. [SG/PL]
- What I am most interested in is/are your immediate reactions. [SG/PL]
- What we need is/are a few bright teachers. [SG/PL]
- The schools have a careers(Adjective--relating to advice about jobs and training) advisor.[a number of schools share the same advisor]
- The schools have careers advisors. [each school has one or more advisors.]
- The house must have a garden.
- The houses must have gardens.

Below are given more examples:

- A biggest problem is/*are mosquitoes.[the number of the subject noun phrase determines whether it takes singular concord or plural concord. It cannot be determined by the number of the complement noun phrase]
- BUT the most attractive sight in the fair held last week without any doubt was/were the Indian toys.[sg/pl][if the distance between the subject and the verb is great/greater, then the verb agrees with the complement or the subject.]
- What attracts me most in the fair is/are his magic shows.[sg/pl]

Aspectual Concord: According to Chalker et al, *aspect* refers to a category of grammar used to describe how a situation, as expressed by a verb, or by a verb in combination with its arguments, unfolds over time. It states that a progressive verb selects a progressive verb and a non-progressive verb selects a non-progressive verb. Examples:

- What Ranita *did* next was *clean*/*cleaning the room.
- What Ranita was *doing* was *cleaning*/*clean the room.

Pronoun concord: Different types of agreement are possible with personal pronouns. They are said to agree with the following verb: The finite verb (auxiliary or lexical verbs) must agree with the personal pronoun in person and number, with the antecedent noun (in number and gender), and with subsequent pronouns and determiners (in number and gender). This is found only in the present tense when the third person singular pronoun is followed by the verb with the -s suffix. But in other cases, no suffix is seen. Example:

- He goes /* go to school every day.
- I go/*goes to school every day.
- It comes/*come.
- He is/*am/*are going to school.
- I am/*is going to school
- When the teacher turned up on the first floor, he shouted at the students.
- When *Amal* came to the party, *he* gave me a good piece of news.

- When *Juthika* came to the party, *she* gave me a good piece of news.
- When *the storm* broke, *it* forced us to remain indoors.
- *He* seated *himself* in an armchair.
- *She* seated *herself* on the chair.
- *She* consoled *herself* with the thought that *her* friends would understand.
- The committee has[singular] not yet decided how they[plural] should react to the letter.
- A family who quarrel[plural] among themselves[plural] should be avoided.
- A family which dates back to the Norman Conquest is very old.[singular concord, hence which/*who]
- Somebody[sg] has done their[pl] work.
- Someone's[sg] left their[pl] bag behind.
- Never judge someone[sg] by the way they[pl] look. (or Never judge someone by the way he or she looks.)[Cambridge dictionary]
- Everybody/everyone[sg] is doing their[pl] duty.
- Nobody[sg] has their [pl]fridges repaired any more.
- No one[sg] has their [pl]fridges repaired any more.
- If anyone would like further information about the dogs, they should call Canine Rescue on 0502 75257.
- If anyone would like further information about the dogs, he or she should call Canine Rescue on 0502 75257.[Cambridge dictionary]

[N.B.: According to Biber et al, the indefinite pronouns *anybody/anyone*, *everybody/everyone*, *nobody/no one*, and *somebody/someone* combine with singular verb forms, even though co-referent pronouns and determiners may be plural forms.]

Vernacular concord/Non-standard concord in conversation: In conversation and dialogues in fiction we encounter the violation of the ordinary rules of grammatical concord. The non-standard forms used include *I were*, *you was*, *she were*, *they was*, *I says*, *you says*, *he don't*, *they doesn't*. The examples of non-standard concord are as follows:

- Are you in agreement with her, I says (instead of say).
- Times is hard (instead of are)
- Well he don't go down the street so much (instead of doesn't)
- Yes ,I was a nurse/ Was you? (instead of were)

Concord with quantifying expressions/quantifiers: Quantifiers followed by uncountable nouns or singular plural take singular concord. There may be an intervening of between the quantifier and the noun. The determiners can function pronominally. The quantifiers are *all*, *any*, *none*, *some*, *little/less/least*, *,much/more/most*, *,a great deal*, *a little*, *a lot*, *,lots*, and *plenty*.

- All of the food has[sg] gone.
- Not all of them were invited.
- All I want is peace and quiet.
- It was all that I had.
- All(=a situation or to life in general) is silent on the island now.
- As you'll have read in our news pages, all(=a situation or to life in general) has not been well of late.
- Almost all of the music was from Italian operas.
- All you need is a hammer and some nails.
- All I'm asking for is a little respect.
- All was dark and silent down by the harbour wall.
- We need some more paint; there isn't any left.
- I need some stamps. Are there any in your bag?
- Are any of the paintings for sale?
- Are any of you going to the meeting?
- None of these pens works/work.
- We have three sons but none of them lives/live nearby.

- None of the work (uncount noun) was[singular concord] done.[When you use none of with an uncountable noun, the verb is in the singular.—Oxford Dictionary]
- None of the trains is/are going to London.[When you use none of with a plural noun or pronoun, or a singular noun referring to a group of people or things, you can use either a singular or a plural verb. The singular form is used in a formal style in British English---Oxford Dictionary]
- None of her family has/have been to college.
- Here are some of our suggestions.
- Some (a number of people) disapprove of the idea.
- Some of the music was weird.
- Some (=a number of people or things but not all) say it was an accident, but I don't believe it.
- Some of his jokes were very rude.
- 'Do you know where the screws are?' 'There are some in the garage.'
- Little of what he said was understood by me.
- Little is known about the causes of the problem.
- Little of their wealth now remains.
- A little of the milk has got spilled.
- Little is known about his upbringing and education.
- There was less of a crowd at the match today than at last week's.
- How others see me is the least of my worries (= I have more important things to worry about).
- The least they could have given me was half a day to rest.
- The least his hotel could do is provide a little privacy.
- Well, the least you can do, if you won't help me yourself, is to tell me where to go instead.
- Much of the city was destroyed in the attack.
- How much of this book is fact and how much is fiction ?
- Isn't there any more of that nice cheese?
- Wherever we dug , there were more of them.
- It's more of a guess than an estimate.
- More [=more people] were found as the search continued.
- We're waiting until *more* [=more information] is known.
- No, I wouldn't call the colour red—it's more of a maroon.
- There are thousands of verbs in English and most (of them) are regular.
- It was Sunday and most of the shops were shut.
- Most of what Hannah told me wasn't true. Some were barefoot, most were in rags.
- A good deal of research has been done on the subject.[*a great deal of* or *a good deal of* is used with uncountable nouns .]
- There is little we can do to help.
- Little is known about her life.
- There is only a very little at stake here.
- They don't understand much but they do understand a little.
- Have some more cake. There's lots left.
- He has invited nearly a hundred people but a lot aren't able to come.
- There were lots of people at the party.
- A lot of people were hurt.[*a lot of* can be used with both uncount and count nouns.]
- A lot of money was spent on it.
- A hell/heck of a lot of people are disappointed.[here *a lot of people* is the complement of hell/heck]
- Lots of patience is needed.[SG]
- Lots of people were hurt and lots of money **was** spent on it.[When talking about years, days, weeks etc, we usually use *many* instead of *a lot of* : *The book took the author a lot of years to write.
- 'Do we need more milk?' 'No, there's plenty in the fridge.'
- Don't grab at the balloons, children - there are plenty for everyone.
- There's plenty to do here.
- There's plenty (adverb)more beer in the fridge.
- Don't worry there are plenty of options.
- There was still plenty of time(*(plenty time) to take Jill out for pizza.
- There are plenty of cars on display here.

- Most of the copies were seized in raids.
- Either of us believes it.[singular concord: singular and plural forms are found with *either* and *neither*.]
- Either of you think of me [plural concord]
- Neither of these words is much help. [singular concord]
- Neither of us believe in useless symbols. [plural concord]
- None of us has been aboard except Vinck. [singular concord]
- None of us really believe it is ever going to happen not to us, she said at last.[plural concord]
- None describes him/herself as such in the party's official literature. [singular concord. *None* alone shows a distinct preference for singular concord. Plural concord is the norm in conversation, while in the written registers there is an overall preference for singular concord—Prof Biber et al]
- Plenty of shops are seen here.[PL]
- There's plenty of time,[SG]
- The majority of students are not diligent.[PL when used with plural noun]
- The majority of his work deals with communicative competence.[SG when used with singular noun]
- A number of people have/has gathered at the fair[SG/PL]
- A couple of my friends are/*is going to Delhi.[PL]

Concord between subject and its complement and between object and its complement: The verb may agree with its complement in number. There must be concord of number between the subject and its complement and the object and its complement. The rule is that if the subject is singular, then its complement is singular and that if the subject is plural, then its complement must be plural. If the object is singular, its complement is singular. If the object is plural, then its complement must be plural. As Quirk et al notes, this type of concord arises naturally from the semantic roles of the two complements. Examples:

- My uncle is a teacher [singular concord: both subject and its complement are singular]
- My uncles are teachers [plural concord: both subject and its complement are plural]
- He considered his colleague a complete idiot [both the object and its complement are singular]
- He considered his colleagues complete idiots [both the object and its complement are plural]

There are exceptions to this type of concord as well. Before discussing the exceptions, we must throw some light on **attribute**. An attribute is an adjective or noun phrase which function as subject complement (ascribing a property to the subject) or object complement (ascribing a property to the object). There are two semantic roles for the attribute: **identification/specifying** and **characterization/ascriptive**. In the case of identification, the subject/object complement is identifying/specifying in the sense that it identifies/specifies the subject noun phrase and it acts as the identifier and the subject noun phrase is identified and here the complement is usually definite noun phrases. There are few differences between identification attributes and characterization attributes. Only identification attributes permit reversal of the subject and the complement without any semantic difference. For example, *Pradip is my brother---My brother is Pradip*. But if the subject complement used as identification attribute is used with an optionally omitted determiner, subject-complement reversal is not possible: *Amitabh is president of the company---*President of the company is Amitabh* BUT *Amitabh is the president of the company –The president of the company is Amitabh*. Only characterization attributes can be realized by adjective phrases but identification attributes cannot. For example, *Anup is an honest man---* *Anup is honest*. Noun phrases used as identification attributes are normally definite noun phrases but noun phrases used as characterization attributes are indefinite noun phrases. In “His second son was John”, *John* is the identifier and *his second son* is identified. In the case of characterization, the subject/object complement is ascriptive/descriptive and is an indefinite noun phrase. In “Kim is an honest person”, the complement is ascriptive and non-identifying. Examples:

- John is my brother (identifying/specifying)
- John became my friend(identifying/specifying)
- His rude response seemed a major reason for his dismissal(identifying/specifying)
- Kim's room is the next one to mine(identifying/specifying)
- We made him our manager (identifying/specifying)
- His best friend is Ann (identifying/specifying)
- Jim called his wife Ned (identifying/specifying)
- Mary considered Chamelia her role model (identifying/specifying)

- The teacher called their daughter an intelligent student (ascriptive/characterization)
- Ann was a pretty girl (ascriptive/characterization)
- The chief considered the operation a success (ascriptive/characterization)
- The operation seemed a success (ascriptive/characterization)
- Aditya is a good student (ascriptive/characterization)

Many copular clauses are ambiguous. In other words, they are said to have two interpretations (both identification & characterization). Examples:

- His first proposal was a joke. [Ascriptive/characterization interpretation: his first interpretation was laughable like a joke—a joke gives an evaluation of his proposal & specifying/identification interpretation: this interpretation is context-dependent—as far as the best way of opening a speech is concerned, his first proposal was to open it with a joke/it was a joke that he proposed first]
- The victim was his sister. [ascriptive interpretation: he may have several sisters and the victim is related to him as sister & specifying interpretation: he has only one sister and specifying reading identifies who the victim was.]

The exceptions as mentioned above are as follows. Examples:

- My only hope for the future is my children. [singular concord: the subject is singular but its complement is plural—here it seems that the concord between the subject and the complement is absent. But here the complement *my children* is condensed (*My only hope for the future is in my children*—here the prepositional phrase is the complement).
- My only hope for the future are my children [Plural concord: here the complement is identifying: *My children are my only hope for the future*. We know that as the complement is identifying, subject-complement reversal is possible and plural concord is seen —Quirk et al.]
- More nurses is the next item on the agenda. [singular concord: here we find the condensed subject—*the question of more nurses*. We can say that here we find the implied singular head: *The topic 'more nurses' is the next item on the agenda*. In spite of the plural subject, singular concord is possible because of the potentiality of subject-complement reversal and the complement is identifying: *The next item on the agenda is more nurses*]
- More nurses are the next item on the agenda. [plural concord: formal concord]
- Their principal crop is/*are potatoes. [singular concord: the complement is a generic plural noun phrase: *Potatoes are their principal crop*. Here we cannot use plural concord in spite of the potentiality of subject-complement reversal because the complement is a generic noun phrase.]
- Their principal crop is the potato. [singular concord: the complement is a generic singular noun phrase]
- The man is nuts. [singular concord: here the term 'nuts' is an adjective meaning 'insane']
- Good manners are a rarity these days. [plural concord: here we find the complement has characterization attributes or is ascriptive. Although the subject complement is nominal in form, it has the function of an adjective meaning *rare*. The complement is nominal in form but it is ascriptive/non-identifying: *Good manners are rare these days*]
- Good manners[pl] is[sg] a rarity these days. [singular concord: we find the condensed subject: The question of good manners is a rarity]
- The younger children are/*is a problem. [plural concord: here we find the complement has characterization attributes or is ascriptive. The complement is nominal in form but it is ascriptive/non-identifying: *The younger children are problematic*. Here the reversal is not possible.]
- The next few bars are pure Tchaikovsky. [plural concord: here we find the complement has characterization attributes /is ascriptive. The complement is nominal in form but it is ascriptive/non-identifying i.e. the complement has the function closer to an adjective.]
- The next few bars is pure Tchaikovsky. [singular concord: here we find the condensed singular subject: a group of the bars]
- Dogs are/*is good company [plural concord: here we find the complement has characterization attributes /is ascriptive. Although the complement is nominal in form, it has the function closer to an adjective---we may say *Dogs are good companions*: company (abstract noun) is similar in meaning to companions(concrete noun). The complement is nominal in form but it is ascriptive/non-identifying: *Dogs are pleasant and entertaining*.]

- The houses are brick/*bricks[plural concord: here no singular/plural contrast—the houses are built of brick—the condensed complement. *Brick* is a material noun. We find the adjective phrase]
- A great attraction are the antique shops in the town. [plural concord: if the subject is placed after the verb, the verb agrees with the subject. Here *a great attraction* is the complement placed before the subject *the antique shops*.]

[N.B.: The singular subject may be used with a few idioms which are plural in number: '*Do you know what he said?*' '*Go on—I'm all ears.*' (=I am listening with all my attention). *The children were all eyes* (=acutely vigilant or observant). *He had to be all elbows to get his project approved as there were many other competing proposals.* (=aggressively attractive). *I'm all fingers and thumbs* (=move your hands in an awkward way)today. *That's the second plate I've dropped this morning.*]

Concord in cleft/pseudo-cleft /combination of both/reverse cleft constructions: In cleft constructions, we place singular concord after *it*. In pseudo-cleft constructions, *what* is ambivalent in number in that it may refer to 'the thing that' or 'the things that'. The number the verb takes depends on the interpretation of the number of the *wh*-element:

- It is Rina who has done the work.
- It is peace and quiet that he wanted most.
- What he wanted most was peace and quiet.
- What it was that he wanted most was peace and quiet.
- What he gave her was a worthless piece of jewellery.
- What it was that he gave her was a worthless piece of jewellery.
- It is the boys who have stolen the apples.
- What we need most is books. [*what* as a fronted object, singular concord and plural subject complement. BUT * *Books is what we need most/what is needed most.*]
- What we need most are books. [*what* as a fronted object is ambivalent in number and we find plural concord and plural subject complement]
- What are needed most by us are books.
- What is needed most is books.[prescriptive grammarians use the singular verb for the verb within the *what*-clause and for the verb of the principal clause.]
- What they like is a long lunch.
- A long lunch is what they like.[reverse pseudo-cleft]
- What you are, my boy, is too big for your boots.
- Peace and quiet is what he wants.[reverse]
- What he wants is unobtainable.
- What he wanted to know (fused relative clause)was what I told her.
- What I told her(subordinate interrogative clause-- was what he wanted to know.
- What I asked you was whether she had seen him.
- What I regretted was that she had seen him .
- What she did next was correct.
- Whether he'll survive is uncertain.
- The question occupying us all is whether he'll survive.
- Whether he'll survive is the question occupying us all.
- What were supposed to be new proposals were in fact modifications of earlier ones.
- What was once a place is now a pile of rubble.
- Whatever book a *Times* reviewer praises sells well.
- What ideas he has are his wife's.
- It's the wages that count. Not over-generous, but there you are.
- What she needs is friends. [more natural than *What she needs are friends*---Swan. Relative *what*-clauses are normally the subject of a singular verb. Plural verbs are used before longer plural complements, especially if *what* is a long way from the verb: *What we need most of all are some really new ideas.*]

According to Swan, in a *who/what* question, if the answer is the subject of a clause, the verb with *who/what* is singular, even if the answer is plural:

- Who is digging the ground? [Answer: Tom, Peter and Harry are digging it. This question is more natural than *Who are digging the ground?*]
- Who is at the concert? [more natural than *Who is at the concert?*]
- What lives/*live in the little holes?[Answer: Rabbits]

If the answer to a *who/what* question is the complement of a clause, the verb can be plural:

- Who are your favourite friends? [Answer: My favourite friends are Niloy, Sumit, and Amit]
- What are your politics? [Answer: My politics are extreme left-wing]

Concord with *another/an/a/every* + Adjective with nouns:

- We've still got another (= a further) forty miles to go.
- Finished?' 'No, I've got another three questions to do.'
- Just think, in another three months (= three months from now) it'll be summer again.
- My passport is valid for another two years.
- We need an extra five pounds.
- We have been waiting for a good four hours.
- I spent a happy four hours looking through the window.
- I have had a very busy three days.
- The rich man remained awake a good many nights.
- My teacher told me a good few stories.
- This natural phenomenon is seen every thirty years.

Concord and distributive plurals: A plural noun is used to talk about several people doing the same thing. It is also used with possessives. Plural nouns are used express the repeated idea and in generalisations.

- Ask the students to bring raincoats/a raincoat to school.
- The pupils should blow their noses/*nose in the open.
- Ten people lost their lives/*life in the plane crash.
- I often get headaches/a headache. [singular and plural nouns are used to describe repeated single events]
- He sometimes goes for rides over the hills. [repeated event]
- I often get a headache when I have been doing my homework. [when details of the time/situation are given, singular nouns are used.]
- He often goes for a ride over the hills after lunch.
- I sometimes throw a stone into the river. [=only one stone is thrown each time]
- I sometimes throw stones into the river. [=more than one stone is thrown each time]
- We usually visit the zoo on Sunday.[repeated events]
- We usually visit the zoo on Sundays(=every Sunday---no exception).
- He is not at his best in the morning.[repeated events]
- He is not at his best in the mornings.(=every morning---no exception)

According to Swan, singular and plural nouns are used in generalisations and rules. Mixtures of singular and plural are also possible and this is found with fixed singular expressions like *at the beginning*:

- We use a past participle(sg) in a perfect verb form(sg)/we use past participles(pl) in perfect verb forms(pl).
- All documents must be accompanied by a translation of the original.
- All documents must be accompanied by translations of the originals.
- Subjects agree with their verb.
- Children may resemble both their father and their mother in different ways.
- Discourse markers often come at the beginning of sentences.

Concord with coordinated and complex subjects: According to Huddleston and Pullum, rules which determine the agreement feature values of coordinate structures as a whole on the basis of the values of each of the coordinates are generally known as **resolution rules**. Coordinated subjects usually take plural agreement. According to Peters, the coordinator *and* is involved in conjoining words/phrases in several kinds of relationship: a) as a unitary concept where two words/phrases form an integrated unit e.g. *bread and butter*, *hammer and sickle*, *bed and breakfast*, *fish and chips* [here one item cannot be segregated from the other – bread and butter are an integrated unit]; b) as persons in a reciprocal or mutual relationship or participating jointly in an action e.g. *Mary and John are bosom friends*, *Mary and John played duets*, etc.[we cannot say *Mary is a bosom friend* and *John is a bosom friend* & *Mary played duets* and *John played duets* ; c) as segregated items e.g. *Mary and John passed the examination*, *Mary and John attended the function*, etc [we can say *Mary passed the exam* and *John passed the exam* & *Mary attended the function* and *John attended the function*].

Subject Noun phrases with AND: Singular agreement is seen when the coordination is unitary (having a single referent). It does not matter whether the individual coordinates are singular or plural. We find two coordinates are singular, and one of the two coordinates is singular and the other is plural. In the case of **coordinative apposition**, each of the coordinates has the same reference, with no reduction implied. Examples:

- Bed and breakfast costs from £30 per person per night. [SG]
- Bread(sg) and butter(sg) is my favourite breakfast. (Unitary concept and singular verb)
- Bacon and eggs is my favourite breakfast.[SG]
- Bacon and eggs is on the menu.[SG]
- Bread and butter was all we had.[=bread with butter on it]
- His bread and butter was telemarketing.[SG]
- Bacon and eggs are very expensive today.[PL]
- The anxiety and anger is then taken away.[sg---anxiety and anger are merged into a single emotional state.]
- Rice and curry is my favourite dish (a meal consisting of rice and curry: unitary concept and singular verb)
- A horse and carriage (a horse-drawn carriage) is the only means of our going there.
- All coming and going has been restricted (unitary concept referring to the event consisting of coming and going -there is no going without coming: the movement of people arriving at the place and leaving the place; singular verb)
- The comings and goings (=the movements of people arriving at places and leaving places) of visitors were watched by me. (not unitary; plural verb)
- The crown and glory of life is character (unitary concept; singular verb)
- The rise and fall of daily temperatures is recorded every day. (unitary concept referring to one natural event; singular verb)
- Whisky and soda(water) has been put on the table (unitary concept -whisky and soda water is a simple combination which can enhance the whisky's flavour; singular verb)
- Slow and steady wins the race (unitary concept and singular verb)
- The tumult and (the)shouting (tumultuous shouting) has died down (unitary concept; singular verb: hendiadys-a rhetorical device)
- A hammer and sickle was placed on the ground floor. (unitary concept and singular verb)
- The hammer and sickle was flying over the Kremlin (=a single flag) [notional concord]
- Eggs and bacon is my favourite breakfast (=a meal consisting of eggs and bacon --here the subject conceptualised as a single unit and so singular verb)
- Eggs and bacon are good for our health (=the two foods are separately good for our health)
- Your diligence and your competence amazes/amaze us (here both singular and plural verbs are possible. The singular verb conveys that the diligence and competence form a single cause of amazement but the plural verb conveys that each of them is a cause of amazement. The possibility of both singular and plural verbs is usually used with abstract nouns.)
- Mary and John are now ready (a compound sentence because we can rewrite the sentence using two principal clauses: Mary is now ready and John is now ready)
- Your problem and mine (my problem) are similar.
- Danish bacon and eggs makes a good breakfast. (notional concord -unitary concept: singular verb.)

- Danish bacon and eggs sell very well in London (plural verb: not referring to a single meal, two items.)
- The Bat and Ball sells good beer (a pub--notional concord: singular verb)
- The chair of the finance subcommittee, and the source of all our problems has voted in favour of cuts for twenty-first time. —Huddleston & Pullum (Coordinative apposition: here we find the singular verb because the subject refers to a single person. The chair of the finance subcommittee and the source of all our problems are one and the same person.)
- Our chef and chauffeur has decided to emigrate. (Coordinative apposition--singular verb because our chef and our chauffeur are one and the same person)
- Our chef and chauffeur have decided to emigrate (plural verb because here two separate people are involved.)
- This temple of ugliness and memorial to Victorian bad taste was erected in the main street of the city—Quirk et al. (Coordinative apposition: the two noun phrases both refer to a statue: singular verb)
- This temple of ugliness, a memorial to Victorian bad taste, was erected in the main street of the city. (noun in apposition)
- His aged servant and the subsequent editor of his collected papers was with him at his deathbed (coordinative apposition: singular verb--the servant and the editor are the same person)
- His aged servant and the subsequent editor of his collected papers were with him at his deathbed. (Plural verb: here the servant and the editor are not the same person)
- Your fairness and impartiality has been much appreciated (qualities are conceptualised as a complex unity: singular verb)
- Your fairness and impartiality have been much appreciated (qualities are conceptualised as separate)
- Your fairness and your impartiality have been much appreciated (plural verb: a repeated determiner biases the choice to plural)
- Her calmness and confidence is astonishing (qualities are conceptualised as a complex unity: singular verb)
- Her calmness and confidence are astonishing (qualities are conceptualised as separate)
- Law and order has been established (conceptualised as a complex unity: singular verb)
- Law and order have been established. (conceptualised as separate)
- His camera, his radio, his money were confiscated (asyndetic coordination = coordination without *and*: plural verb)
- His camera and his radio and his money were confiscated (syndetic coordination=coordination with *and*: plural verb)
- His camera, his radio and his money were confiscated (syndetic coordination=coordination with *and*: plural verb)
- Pink and white is my choice for that room (singular verb).
- Their defeat and subsequent surrender means[sg] that the war is over.
- A whole cluster of biblical references focus[pl] on this notion.[Here a postmodifying noun in the subject noun phrase influences the verb because it is closer rather than the head *cluster*

[N.B.: The conjunction *AND* may yield two types of interpretation: **combinatory interpretation** and **segregatory interpretation**. It is to be noted that a sentence in which coordination by *and* of smaller units is logically equivalent to coordination of clauses is treated as a compound sentence. In other words, a compound sentence with *and* involves segregatory interpretation. Examples:

- Amal and Bimal solved the problem together. (combinatory interpretation) [=one act of solving the problem with the two working together]
- Amal and Bimal solved the problem [segregatory and combinatory interpretations]
- Amal solved the problem and Bimal solved the problem (segregatory interpretation) [=two acts of solving the problem]
- The teacher was young and energetic (segregatory interpretation) [a compound sentence: the teacher was young and the teacher was energetic]
- One teacher was young and energetic (combinatory interpretation)[the properties "young" and "energetic" being ascribed to the same teacher]
- One teacher was young and one teacher was energetic[segregatory interpretation][the young teacher and the energetic teacher are different.]
- John and Kim are a pair of crooks(combinatory)[simple sentence]

- Amal and Bimal are Indian (segregatory)[compound sentence]
- Aditya and Kausiki are honest[segregatory interpretation: compound sentence: Aditya is honest and Kausiki is honest]
- His problem and mine are similar. [segregatory interpretation: compound sentence: his problem is similar to mine and mine is similar to his]
- What he said and what he thought were his own affair. [plural concord: segregatory interpretation: compound sentence: what he said was his own affair and what he thought was his own affair]
- What he said and did was his own affair. [singular concord: that which he said and did was his own affair]
- What he said and did were his own affair. [plural concord: what he said and what he did were his own affair]
- What he said and did were two different things[plural concord]

When a singular uncountable noun is pre-modified by words/phrases coordinated by *and*, the noun/noun phrase may imply two or more separate sentences and take plural verb. But when a singular uncountable noun is postmodified by phrases coordinated by *and*, the noun/noun phrase take singular concord. Examples:

- British and Indian beer are (both) of sterling quality. [British beer is ...and Indian beer is...]
- White and brown sugar are (equally) useful for the preparation of the food. [white sugar is... and brown sugar is ...]
- Beer from India and America is much better than British beer. [singular agreement]

According to Quirk et al, a generic noun phrase with a singular count head requires a plural verb when the head is pre-modified and the premodification contains coordination by *and* . these noun phrases are notionally plural (short-term and long-term loans; first-language and second language learners):

- The short-term and (the) long-term loan(sg) are handled very differently by the bank. [plural agreement]
- A first-language and (a) second-language learner(sg) share some strategies in their acquisition of the language. [plural agreement]

According to Quirk et al, if an adverbial (e.g. *sometimes*, *perhaps*, etc) is attached to a second noun phrase linked to the first noun phrase by *and*, the construction is parenthetical, and grammatical concord similarly requires the verb to agree in number with the first noun phrase. Examples:

- A writer, and sometimes an artist, is invited to address the society---Quirk et al
- The ambassador—and perhaps his wife too---is likely to be present---Quirk et al

If first, second and third person pronouns are linked by *and*, the verb will be plural and no person concord is not needed because person distinctions are absent in the plural. But if they are linked by *or*, the principle of proximity applies. Examples:

- I and you are very friendly. [plural verb]
- You and I are very friendly. [plural verb]
- He and I are very friendly. [plural verb]
- Either my friend or I am going to Delhi. [proximity agreement]
- Either I or my friend is going to Delhi. [proximity agreement]
- Neither you, nor I, nor anyone else knows the solution. [singular verb: proximity agreement]
- Either my friend is going or I am.

The rule is that subject noun phrases which are coordinated by AND take plural concord. But there are exceptions to this general rule:

- Amal and Bimal state that they will go to the States [plural concord]

- Tolerance and openness have been made excuses for the exploitation of them [plural concord]
- The room and the whole house was full of really good stuff [singular concord: the reference is to something viewed as a single entity: the room is part of the house—Prof Biber et al, page 182]
- The bomber and its cargo probably weighs over a hundred tons. [singular concord: the two entities viewed as a unit]
- In addition, (lack of good, affordable pre-school and out-of-school childcare, and responsibility for the care of elderly relatives and household chores) means that part-time work seems the only practical option. [singular concord: the circumstances referred to in the subject noun phrases are collectively said to have particular consequences. An equivalence is set up between the coordinated noun phrases and the following *that*-clause—Prof Biber, page 183]
- The very large number of neurons, and the multiplicity of possible connections among them means that the nervous pathways between and within the ganglia are extremely complicated. [singular concord: the circumstances referred to in the subject noun phrases are collectively said to have particular consequences. An equivalence is set up between the coordinated noun phrases and the following *that*-clause—Prof Biber, page 183]

If the subject noun phrases of different grammatical persons are coordinated by *AND* , the verb takes plural concord. In the case of asyndetic coordination (without *and*), the verb takes plural concord:

- I and he have gone there.[plural concord]
- He and you are to attend the meeting.[plural concord]
- Her dress, her mobile phone, her radio were very expensive [asyndetic coordination]
- Her dress, her mobile phone, and her radio were very expensive[syndetic coordination]

Some expressions which are joined by *and* usually have singular determiners, verbs and pronouns as we think of them as a single idea :

- This gin and tonic is[SG] not very strong (Swan)
- Your toast and honey is[SG] on the table.(Swan)

According to Peters (2004), when the coordinates are uneven in length, or when the second coordinate is a singular noun, a singular verb may seem appropriate:

- JK's article and the negative reaction to it was[sg] on her mind.
- Bird songs and the sound of the waterfall makes [sg]it a magical place.
- *John and I* or *brother and sister* have taken their dinner.

In compound subjects with *or*, *neither...nor*, and *either...or* the is determined by the closer member of the pair:

- Do(pl) the officers(PL) or the faculty advisor make the final decision ?
- Does(sg) the officer(sg) or his friends make the final decision?

The subject is treated as plural when one of an implied pair of nouns is left out. On the other hand, the linked units may refer to one thing, in which case the subject is singular:

- Regular and decaffeinated coffee taste(pl) the same to me (regular coffee and decaffeinated coffee);
- Both the immature and the precocious student need individual attention (both the immature student and the precocious student).
- My closest colleague and best friend has recently divorced her husband (My closest colleague is my best friend);
- Her first and best essay has won a prize (Her first essay is her best essay).

Two linked units may sometimes be viewed either as separate or as combined into one whole. According to the interpretation, the plural or the singular may be used (Greenbaum & Whitcut):

- Law and order have(pl) been re-established in the country (both law and order).
- Law and order has(sg) been re-established in the country (=the rule of law and order).
- Bread and butter is(sg) all that is provided with the tea (=bread spread with butter)
- Bread and butter are(pl) sold in the shop on the corner (=both bread and butter)
- Their respect and admiration for her is (sg)unlimited.
- Their respect and admiration for her are (pl)unlimited.
- The hammer and sickle (i.e. one flag) was(sg) flying from the flagpole;
- The Bat and Ball (i.e. one pub) sells(sg) good beer,
- Your whisky and soda is(sg) on the table.
- We're at the beginning of a period in which real negotiation and compromise is(sg) possible.

The singular is required when *and* introduces something in parenthesis. Whether or not *and* is present, the singular is required if the second unit is negative, the meaning being then clearly singular

- The head of my department - and perhaps her spouse – is(sg) expected to attend the reception.
- Your style, and even your handwriting, needs(sg) to be improved.
- A boy, not a woman, is(sg) playing the part.

When the two parts of the subject name parts of a whole or two closely related things, a singular verb often follows:

- The dynamism and “vive la force” of unprincipled men-of-action is[sg] not a solution to the crisis but one of its causes.

When a singular subject is modified by coordinate adjectives, the subject will be followed by a plural verb. Such a sentence is an ellipsis and one part of the subject is omitted:

- Intellectual and political freedom (=intellectual freedom and political freedom) are essentially needed.

When the subject is compounded of *not only...but also* or *not...but*, we follow proximity concord:

- Not only Richard but also Robert was questioned by the police.
- Not only was it raining all day at the wedding but also the band was late [To add emphasis, we can use *not only* at the beginning of a clause. When we do this, we invert the subject and the verb.]
- Not only will they paint the outside of the house but also the inside.
- Not only did she forget my birthday, but she also didn't even apologise for forgetting it.
- Not only have you just relaxed your body, but you may have also boosted your brain power.
- Not only do the nurses want a pay increase, they want reduced hours as well.
- Nobody has no friends. (=Everybody has at least one or two friends.)

Subject Noun phrases with OR : We find four kinds of *OR* : exclusive *or*, inclusive *or*, *or* as a coordinator and *or* introducing a supplement .When we connect two or more coordinates using *or* and they are placed in the subject position, we use a singular verb if the two coordinates are singular , and we use a plural verb if the two coordinates are plural .“ The use of *or* indicates that the coordinates are to be considered separately. In the case of *or*, therefore, a coordination of two singulars does not yield a plural, as it generally does with *and* .”(Huddleston & Pullum, page 508) If the coordinates have the same number(symmetric-- all being singular or all being plural) , there is no problem with subject-verb agreement. Here we find symmetric uses of *or*. It is to be noted that we use *or* after the negative form of a verb, instead of *and* (I like tea and coffee. I like both tea and coffee. I don't like tea or coffee. I don't like tea and I don't like coffee). If each of the noun phrases coordinated by *OR* is singular, the verb is singular but we also find plural concord. If one of the noun phrases is plural, the verb takes plural concord and if the noun phrases each are plural, the verb takes plural concord:

- A mango or an apple is to be given to the child (singular coordinates). [here the whole coordination has the same number (singular)as each coordinate(singular)]

- Mangoes or apples are to be given to the children (plural coordinates) [here the whole coordination has the same number (plural) as each coordinate (plural)]
- Riya, Priya or Johns was present there. [singular concord]
- Check that no food or drink has been consumed. [singular concord]
- I'll wait until my sister or mother come down, and I'll eat with them. [plural concord—Prof Biber, page 183]
- Either Conservatives or Labour have realised. [plural concord—Biber page 183]
- Whether interest rates or intervention were the chosen instrument, and in what combination, was probably a secondary question. [plural concord-Biber, page 183]

But if the coordinates are of different number (asymmetric), we adopt the principle of proximity. In other words, if the coordinates don't have the same number or have the mixed number, the number of the whole coordination depends on the number of the nearest noun/noun phrase/coordinate. Examples:

- The boys(pl) or the girl (sg) is allowed to attend the function [the whole coordination is singular as the nearest coordinate is singular]
- The girl(sg) or the boys(pl) are allowed to attend the function [the whole coordination is plural as the nearest coordinate is plural]
- Is it a boy or a girl? [nearest noun phrase is *a boy*]
- Are my friends or Ratan going to the party?
- What I say or what I think is/*are no business of yours. [singular verb]

According to Huddleston & Pullum, we find that within the scope of negation, the whole coordination can take plural concord, although the coordinates are of mixed number (sg or pl/pl or sg) and although each of the coordinates is singular. As they note, the coordination is within the scope of a negative, and a negated *or* entails that all coordinates fail to have the property in question. Example:

- I don't think [(either) Mary or the twins] are going to help you. [both Mary and the twins are not going to help you—here both proximity and notional agreement]
- I don't think [(either) the twins or Mary] is/are going to help you [both the twins and Mary are not going to help you. Hence, we find plural concord (notional agreement). And we find proximity agreement]
- I don't think [(either) Mary or John] is/are going to help you. [both Mary and John are going to help you. Here we find proximity agreement (singular) and as all coordinates fail to have the property in question, the plural sounds better and we find notional agreement (plural). It is to be noted that in formal style, singular concord is available.]

Disjunctive coordination with *or* can be of two types: **inclusive disjunction** and **exclusive disjunction**. A disjunctive or a disjunctive grammatical element is a word which is expressive of alternatives. "Exclusive disjunction excludes the possibility of more than one disjunct being true, while inclusive disjunction allows it." (Huddleston & Pullum) Exclusive disjunction denotes 'one-or-the-other-but-not-both', whereas inclusive disjunction allows both alternatives. We find inclusive *or* and exclusive *or*. Examples:

- (Either) the bus was late or it stopped plying on the route. (exclusive disjunction)
- The rich man died in (either) 2002 or 2004. (exclusive disjunction)
- (Either) the train is late or my watch is fast. (inclusive disjunction)
- Our uncle visited us in 2022 or 2023. (inclusive disjunction)

According to Chalker et al. with **disjunctive interrogatives**, the presence of *either* allows the possibility that both alternatives are true: *Did you visit (either) Edinburgh or Glasgow?* But where only one of the alternatives can be true, the word *either* is not possible in a question: *Have you either passed or failed? ; *Is their eldest child either a boy or a girl?

According to Huddleston & Pullum, when *X or Y* is thought of inclusively rather than exclusively, i.e. as "*X or Y or both*", plural agreement is used, though each of the coordinates is singular.

- Problems arise when emotional involvement or lack of experience *prevent*(plural) an objective appraisal of the situation. ---Huddleston & Pullum
- Jogging or swimming are supposed to be good for the heart [plural verb: inclusive disjunction-here *or* approaches the meaning of *and*]
- Jogging or swimming is supposed to be good for the heart [singular verb: exclusive disjunction]

We have seen examples of *or* which is coordinate with the preceding noun or noun phrase—*or* as a coordinating conjunction. We also find *or* in supplements—*or* introducing a supplement. A supplement is looked upon as a correction of the preceding noun phrase and the number of the supplement determines the number of the verb. But when a supplement is used merely as an explanatory and parenthetical reformulation of the first noun phrase, the first noun phrase naturally determines the number of the verb.

- His proposal, or rather the ramifications of it, are/*is going to have a serious effect on our plans. ---Huddleston & Pullum [plural supplement: plural verb/*singular verb]
- Her eyes, or rather the visible one, was/*were pale blue [singular supplement: singular verb/*plural verb]
- Arrhythmia, or irregular contractions of the ventricles is/*are a serious heart condition. (explanatory reformulation)

Or can be used to indicate coordinative apposition (supplement in an explanatory sense as above) and in this case the number of the first appositive determines the verb's number if the two appositives differ in number. Examples:

- The hero, or main protagonist, is Major Coleman[first noun is singular: singular verb]
- The hawks, or bellicose officials, are in the ascendancy[first noun is plural: plural verb]
- Gobbledygook, or the circumlocutions of bureaucratic language, is intentionally difficult to understand. [first noun is singular: singular verb]
- The circumlocutions of bureaucratic language, or Gobbledygook, are intentionally difficult to understand.[the first noun is plural: plural verb]
- Whether interest rates or intervention were[pl] the chosen instrument was a secondary question.[where one of the noun phrases linked by *or* is plural, plural concord is the rule.]

Subject Noun Phrase with *etc* and similar abbreviatory expressions (*and so on*, *and so forth*, *et al*) : If a singular noun is followed by *etc/and so on/and so forth*, a plural verb is normal. *Etc* means 'and other things'. Examples:

- The shape etc. are not significant.
- The school and so on are academic institutions.
- The town and so forth are very important.
- Quirk et al. suggest(pl) that there are different types of coordination. [plural verb]

Gerunds as Subject Noun Phrase with *AND*: When finite and non-finite clauses operate as the subject, the verb is generally singular. According to Radford, when gerunds are coordinated, the verb's number depends on whether two gerunds are construed to represent a single event or two separate ones. Examples:

- Smoking is injurious to health. [singular]
- Smoking cigarettes is injurious to health. [singular]
- Not informing the neighbours was a serious mistake. [singular]
- Cycling is a good exercise[singular]
- Cycling and walking are the two physical exercises. [plural]
- Singing and dancing is not allowed [singular because singing and dancing happen together.]
- Singing and dancing are not allowed [plural because they are two separate events]
- Singing and dancing is an activity I enjoy[singular]
- Singing and dancing are activities I enjoy. [plural]
- Singing or dancing is a good activity. [singular]
- Not taking exercise regularly is a fault. [gerund-participial clause]

- Carrying boxes, cases, parcels and packages is the only task for those servants.
- Carrying boxes, cases, parcels or packages is the only task for those servants

Here the general rule is that when compound subjects joined by the coordinating conjunction and form a well-recognized single unit, they are used with a singular verb.:

- Drinking and driving (simultaneous actions) is (sg)the major cause of accidents.
- Thunder and lightning always scares(sg) us.

Infinitive as Subject noun Phrase with AND: When non-finite clauses operate as the subject, the verb is generally singular. According to Radford, when infinitives are coordinated, the verb's number depends on whether two infinitives are construed to represent a single event or two separate ones. Examples:

- To play football and cricket is enjoyable. [only one verb-*play*, hence only one clause]
- To play football and to play cricket is enjoyable (singular: one event consisting of playing football and cricket—spending the afternoon by playing both football and cricket: continuity maintained)
- To play football and to play cricket in the afternoon is a nice way of spending your time (one event—first playing football and just after it/subsequently, playing cricket is started: continuity maintained)
- To play football and to play cricket are enjoyable (two events)
- For you to play football and for me to play cricket are difficult. [two events by different persons]
- To play football and to play cricket are nice ways of spending you time (two events)
- To play football in the morning and to play cricket in the afternoon are nice ways of spending your time. [two separate events at different times]

Concord with complex noun phrase: The head of a complex noun phrase determines the number of the finite verb. According to Peters, lengthy post-modification of the head noun phrase can induce nonmatching- no matching between the head and the verb's number. Examples:

- The prospect of a better future keeps us going (head-prospect; verb-singular)
- Their hopes of a better future keep them going (head-plural; verb-plural)
- The prospect of a better future for the planet and for our country keep us going (head-singular; verb-plural; here we find notional plural)

Concord with Nominal Relative Clauses/Free Relative clauses/Fused Relative clauses/Independent Relative clauses: Nominal clauses are a type of finite dependent clause. Nominal clauses are of two types. They are nominal *that*-clauses and nominal *wh*-clauses. Nominal *wh*-clauses are of two types. They are dependent interrogative clauses (indirect questions) and nominal relative clauses. When finite clauses operate as the subject, the verb is generally singular. A nominal relative clause is a clause which has no overt antecedent and which contains the antecedent within itself and in which the *wh*-element is merged with its antecedent. In the nominal relative clause, the *wh*-word can be paraphrased by *that which* or *anything which*, i.e., with an antecedent and a relativizer as in ordinary relative clause. Nominal relative clauses can be paraphrased by a general head noun modified by the *wh*-clause functioning as a relative clause. According to Quirk et. al, nominal relative clauses are on the continuum from clause to noun phrase and for the purpose of concord, their number depends on the interpretation of the number of the *wh*-element. *What* and *whatever* can be used as determiners and the concord depends on the number of the determined noun Examples:

- What were supposed to be new proposals were in fact modifications of earlier ones. [plural concord]
- What was once a place is now a pile of rubble. [singular concord]
- Whatever book a *Times* reviewer praises sells well. [determiner: singular concord]
- What ideas he has are his wife's. [determiner: plural concord]
- What money I have is yours. [singular concord: the money (that) I have is yours]
- What possessions I have are yours. [plural concord: the possessions (that) I have are yours]
- What were left behind were five empty bottles [plural concord: the things (that) were left behind were five empty bottles]
- Whatever book you see is yours to take.
- Whatever books I have in the house are borrowed from the public library

- What you need is a good meal. [singular concord]
- Whoever accused my husband is a liar. [singular concord]
- What we need to do is make a list of useful phone numbers. (the thing we need to do)
- Where Carlos used to live is this place. [singular concord]
- Whoever sorts Eagle out is sure to make a lot of money. [singular concord]
- What baffles me is how few of them can spell. [singular concord]
- What could be at work there is an actual enmity towards the very structure of society. [singular concord]
- How one can read the record is the subject of much of this book. [singular concord]
- What we come to is this. [singular concord]
- Why the NTSB was not invited to participate in the investigation by the Mexican authorities is not known. [singular concord]
- What the world needs now is action on climate change. [singular concord]
- Where she went was Manchester. [singular concord]
- Now is when I need you. [singular concord]
- Whoever breaks this law deserves a fine. [singular concord]

When nominal relative clauses in subject position are coordinated by *and/or*, the verb can be singular or plural. If the clauses are thought of as representing different events, the verb is plural, and if the clauses are thought of as representing a single event, the verb is singular. This must be overtly stated. When the clauses are reduced with the coordinator, they take plural concord. Examples:

- Why the man went there and why he took exercise is a mystery. [one event (his going there and his taking exercise are connected in the sense that the latter is a subsequent event): singular concord]
- Why the man went there and why he took exercise are mysteries. [two different events: plural concord: plural complements]
- What I say and what I think are my own affair [plural concord: what I say is my own affair and what I think is my own affair]
- What I say and do are two different things [plural concord: what I say is one thing and what I do is another thing]
- What I say and do is my own affair. [singular concord: that which I say and which I do is my own affair.]

Concord with Nominal *That*-Clauses/Declarative Clauses: When finite clauses operate as the subject, the verb is generally singular. According to Huddleston & Pullum, subjects with the form of an *and*-coordination generally take singular verbs. But it is nevertheless possible to have a plural verb when the predicate treats the coordinates as expressing separate facts, questions, or the like and this would be explicitly stated through the plural complements or inferred from the context. Examples:

- That Robert is honest is known to all. [singular agreement]
- That Robert is honest and that Robert is fond of music is/*are known to all. [singular agreement]
- That Robert is honest and that Robert is fond of music *is/are very important matters. [plural agreement]
- That the form was submitted on the very last day and that the project had not been properly costed suggests/*suggest that the application was prepared in a rush. [singular concord]
- That the form was submitted on the very last day and that the project had not been properly costed are two very strong indications that the application was prepared in a rush. [plural concord: plural complements]
- That he is going there is very interesting. [singular agreement]
- That he is honest and that the person is dishonest is not significant. [singular agreement]

Concord with Dependent interrogative clauses: Dependent interrogative clauses must take singular agreement. But a nominal relative clause as subject may take singular or plural concord, depending on the meaning of the *wh*-element. Examples:

- How the book will sell depends on the reviewers. [singular concord]
- Whether the book will sell depends on the reviewers. [singular concord]
- Whether Robert will go there and whether he will attend the meeting does not matter [singular agreement]
- Whether Robert is honest and whether he works hard are two different questions. [plural agreement: plural complements]
- How you got there doesn't concern me. [singular agreement]
- How the dog escaped and where it went remains/*remain a mystery. [singular concord]
- How the dog escaped and where it went are questions we may never be able to answer. [plural concord: plural complements]
- Why he resigned remains a mystery.

Concord with NO structures/phrases: Prescriptive grammarians use singular agreement when both phrases are singular but in colloquial English, we find plural agreement as well. But if one or both of the conjuncts is plural, we would use plural agreement. Examples:

- No boy and no girl is allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [singular agreement]
- No boy and girl is allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [singular agreement]
- No boys and girls are allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [plural agreement]
- No boy and no girl are allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [plural agreement]
- No boy or no girl is allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [singular agreement]
- No girl or boy are allowed to leave school. [plural agreement in colloquial English]
- No girl or boy is allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [singular agreement]
- No boy or girls are allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [plural agreement: proximity agreement]
- No boys or girl are allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [plural agreement]
- No boy or girl is allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [singular agreement]
- No boy or no girl are allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [plural agreement]
- No boy and no girls have ever visited the place. [plural]
- No boys and no girl have ever visited the place. [plural]
- No girl or no boys have ever visited the place. [plural]
- No girls or no boy have ever visited the place. [plural]

Concord with expletive *there*: If *there*-sentences contain *no*, then agreement is with the first conjunct.

- There is no school, no man and no tree in the village. [three conjuncts are singular]
- There is no school, no men and no trees in the place. [often in indeterminate cases, agreement is with the first conjunct. Here the first conjunct is singular and the verb is plural]
- There are no men, no school and no tree in the village. [the first conjunct is plural and the verb is plural]
- There is no tree, no men and no temple in the village. [the first conjunct is singular and the verb is singular]

Concord with Subject Noun Phrases with *many/many a* & coordination: *Many* precedes plural nouns and naturally the plural noun or noun phrase take a plural verb. But *many a* precedes a singular count noun. Examples:

- Many people feel that the law should be changed. [plural concord]
- Many teachers and many students have decided to watch the movie. [plural concord]
- Many teachers and students have decided to watch the movie. [plural concord]
- There are too many mistakes in this essay.
- Not many people have heard of him.
- There aren't very many weekends between now and Christmas.

- Were there many cars on the road?
- If there were as many women as there are men in parliament, the situation would be very different.
- Many a good man (=many good men) has been destroyed by drink.
- Many a parent (=many parents) has had to go through this same painful process.
- Many a boy and many a girl *dreams/dream of becoming rich [plural verb is possible]
- Many a boy and girl *dreams/dream of becoming rich. [plural verb]
- Many a boy or many a girl is capable of deceiving their friends. [singular verb: proximity agreement—here the verb is made to agree with the nearest conjunct]
- Many a boy or girl goes through an identity crisis. [singular verb: proximity agreement]

Concord with subject noun phrases with *every/each* & coordination: According to Quirk et al, preposed *each* or *every* has a distributive effect and requires a singular verb. Examples:

- Each of the three young doctors in the hospital is/are[sg/pl] specializing in a different subject[Longman Dictionary, page 321: here singular or plural concord is correct as *each of* is followed by the complement which is plural and long.]
- Every one of their songs has been a hit. [singular verb]
- Every song was fantastic. [singular verb]
- Each answer is worth 20 points.
- Not everybody agrees.
- Each of the answers is worth 20 points.
- Each student has been given his or her own email address.
- Each student has been given their own email address.
- Every student in the class is capable of passing the exam.
- Every adult and every child was holding a flag. [singular verb]
- Every adult and child was holding a flag. [singular verb]
- Each adult and each child was holding a flag. [singular verb]
- Each adult and child was holding a flag. [singular verb]

[N.B.: When *each* is used as an adjunct to a plural subject, the plural subject remains in control and the verb is plural. Here *each* is used as an emphasizing pronoun. The number of a later noun depends on whether the *each* comes before or after the verb. If it comes before the verb, the noun remains in the plural. But if it comes after the verb, the noun becomes singular. In other words,

when *each* follows a plural subject, however, the verb and subsequent pronouns remain plural: The apartments each have their own private entrances (not has its own private entrance). When *each* follows the verb, it has been traditionally considered acceptable to say either The boys have each their own bike or The boys have each his own bike, though both of these (and especially the latter) are likely to seem stilted in comparison to The boys each have their own bike or The boys each have their own bikes. ·

- We each have our own car.[emphasizing pronoun]
- Mr. Sen and his wife each were/*was given prizes. [emphasizing pronoun]
- There aren't enough books for everyone to have one each.[adverb: *individually*]
- They each are subject to sentences of five years. [*each* before the verb; the noun is plural *sentences*.....Theodore Bernstein, page 154]
- They are each subject to a sentence of five years. [*each* after the verb; the noun is singular *sentence*]
- They each have their own email address. [emphasizing pronoun]
- We each have different needs and interests. [emphasizing pronoun]
- The children were given one each, handed to them or placed on their plates. [adverb]
- They were selling tickets at six pounds each. [adverb]
- Three doctors each had a different diagnosis. [emphasizing pronoun]
- The cakes are Rs20 each. [adverb]
- We each have a company car (=each of us has a company car).
- I will see you each separately. (= I will see each of you separately).
- My sisters have each married businessman. [*each* is used after auxiliary verbs]

- The witnesses were each perfectly certain of what they said. [*each* is used after *are/were*]
- I bought the girls each an ice cream. [*each* is used after the indirect object but not usually after direct object]
- * She kissed them each----Incorrect[after direct object]

We must not use *each* after words such as ‘almost’, ‘nearly’, or ‘not’. We use *every*.

- Almost every window was broken.
- Not every child enjoyed the party.

Concord with subject noun phrase with *any* and *some* & coordination: *Any* can be followed by singular count/uncount nouns or plural count nouns. Examples:

- Are there any stamps?
- Any colour will do.
- Any teacher will tell you that students learn at different rates.
- There was hardly any food left by the time we got there.
- Mr Jacobson refused to answer any questions.
- There aren't any clean knives. They're all in the dishwasher. (+ plural noun)
- There aren't any biscuits left. They've eaten them all.
- There are no biscuits left. They've eaten them all.
- There weren't any technical problems.
- There were no technical problems.
- Any boy and any girl are allowed to join the party [plural verb]
- Any boy and girl are allowed to join the party [plural verb]
- Any boy or any girl is allowed to join the party [singular verb]
- Any boy or girl is allowed to join the party [singular verb]
- Some boy and some boy have been arrested [plural verb]
- Some boy and girl have been arrested [plural verb]
- Some boy or some girl is waiting for you [singular verb]
- Some boy or girl is waiting for you [singular]
- Not any boy and not any girl are allowed to join the party [plural verb]
- Not any boy and girl are allowed to join the party. [plural verb]

Concord with Arithmetical Sums as subject & Coordination: Arithmetical sums may take a singular verb or a plural verb. According to Larsen-Freeman & Celce-Murcia, arithmetical operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) take singular because they are perceived as reflecting a single numerical entity on both sides of the equation or equal sign. Plural units of distance, money, and time take the singular verb inflection when one entity is implied, but a plural verb inflection when more than one entity is encoded in the subject. Examples:

- Two and two is/are four. [singular or plural verb]
- Ten times five is/are fifty. [singular or plural verb]
- Two fives makes/make ten. [singular or plural verb]
- Two fives are ten. [only plural verb]
- Ten minus two is eight. [only singular verb]
- Ten into fifty is five. [only singular verb]
- Two pounds is nothing. [singular]
- Eighteen years is a long time in the life of a motor car. [singular]
- One plus one is/equals[sg] two.
- 500 miles is a long distance. [sg]
- 2 million dollars is a lot of money. [sg]
- 10 years is a long time to spend on the M.A. thesis. [sg]
- 20 miles are to be added to this freeway next way. [pl]
- 2 dollars are on the table in the kitchen. [pl]

- 3 years (i.e., 1602, 1649, and 1687) are missing from this set of calendars for the 17th century. [pl]

Concord with noun phrases linked by quasi-coordinators: In English we find a few quasi-coordinators. They are prepositions which are similar to coordinators: *along with*, *rather than*, *as well as*, *except*, etc. Here the number of the first noun/noun phrase determines the verb's number. Examples:

- The captain as well as the other players was playing very well. [first noun phrase is singular—the captain]
- One speaker after another was stressing the need of planting more trees. [first noun phrase is singular—one speaker]
- Suman rather than Tirtha was to attend the party. [first noun phrase is singular—Suman]
- The teacher along with hundreds of others has set out for Delhi. [first noun phrase is singular—the teacher]
- The four players as well as their children have gone to Digha. [the first noun phrase is plural--the four players]
- Our meal together with two bottles of red wine has arrived. [first noun phrase is singular—our meal]
- The captain with the other players was tired. [first noun phrase is singular—the captain]
- Sara, accompanied with her father, has gone there. [singular verb]
- Sara and Mary, accompanied by their father, have gone there. [plural verb]
- Sara, accompanied by her friends, has set out for New York. [singular verb]
- No one except his own supporters agree with him. [proximity agreement is reinforced by notional concord: *Only his own supporters agree with him.*]
- No one except his own supporters agrees with him. [formal agreement: singular verb. The subject *No one except his own supporters* is singular. Here no one is the head of the subject noun phrase and is singular.]

We also find notional concord combined with proximity concord and this prompts the plural. This is found in loosely expressed speech. Examples:

- One man with his wife, both looking anxious, were pleading with a guard to let them through. ---Quirk et al [first noun phrase is singular but the verb is plural. The nearest noun phrase is plural--*both*]
- The President, together with his advisors, are preparing a statement on the crisis—Quirk et al [first noun phrase is singular but the verb is plural. The nearest noun phrase is plural---*his advisors*]

Concord with subject noun phrase with (and) not & but not: When a subject noun or noun phrase is followed by *and not* or *not*, the first noun phrase determines the verb's number. In other words, when the second noun or noun phrase is negative and the second noun phrase is or is not linked by *and*, the first noun phrase determines the verb's number. Here the first noun phrase or coordinate determines the number:

Here the principle of notional concord operates. Examples:

- The captain, and not the other players, has decided to play the match.
- The captain, not the other players, has decided to play the match.
- Satarupa, and not her sisters is allowed.
- The two brothers, and not their mother are allowed.

Concord with subject noun phrase with noun in apposition: In English grammar, we find two types of apposition: *noun in apposition* and *coordinative apposition*. When there is a subject noun phrase with a noun in apposition, the number of the subject noun phrase determines the verb's number. The number of the noun in apposition does not matter. What matters is the number of the noun or noun phrase to which it stands in a relation of apposition. Examples:

- Alexander, the king of Macedon, was a great king. [singular verb: here the subject noun phrase is *Alexander* and *the king of Macedon* is the noun in apposition]
- The term *premises* means “the building and land near to it that a business owns or uses.” [singular concord: restrictive apposition. Here *premises* is plural but the verb is singular because of the singular subject.]

- Mr Sen, the uncle to Arnab and father to Bipin, is an honest person. [here we find plural nouns in apposition but the subject is singular: singular verb]
- The verb *use* is intransitive. [singular verb]
- The number thirteen is an uneven number [singular verb]
- Our longest reigning monarch, Queen Victoria, the mother of two sons, has reigned. [singular verb: here *Queen Victoria* is the noun in apposition with the noun phrase *our longest reigning monarch* and *the mother of two sons* is the noun in apposition with *Queen Victoria*.]
- The third edition of OUP's biggest dictionary, the Oxford English Dictionary, is being published online. [singular verb: subject being *the third edition*. The Oxford English Dictionary is the noun in apposition with the noun phrase "OUP's biggest dictionary"]
- The request to send a lot of apples has amazed us. [singular verb]
- The requests to send money have surprised us. [singular verb]
- My work, looking after these old people, is rewarding. [singular verb]
- John's very sensible suggestion, namely that the police should be told, was accepted. [singular verb: subject being *John's very sensible suggestion*]
- The idea that everything would be all right in the end was fantastic. [singular verb]
- My friend and mentor, John Smith, lives there. (singular verb)

We find **full apposition**, **partial apposition**, **appositive/appositional clauses** (finite and non-finite), **restrictive apposition** and **non-restrictive apposition**. We find appositional compounds. An appositional compound is a hyponym of both of its constituent words e.g. *oak tree*, *manservant*, *drummer boy*, etc. In **coordinative apposition**, the units of apposition are joined by *and* or *or*. "Apposition resembles coordination in that the two units are typically the constituents of the same level. The units of coordinative apposition are synonymous, coreferential or related by cataphoric reference." (Matti Rissanen et al) As Quirk et al note, in *coordinative apposition*, no reduction is implied because each of the coordinated units has the same reference, whereas non-appositional (segregatory)coordination can imply reduction of two or more coordinated clauses. It is to be noted here that there is a difference between coordination and coordinative apposition. In coordination, the two units joined by *and/or* have not the same reference, whereas in coordinative apposition, the two units joined by *and* have the same reference. In the case of coordinative apposition, a singular verb is required if each noun phrase is singular Examples:

- This temple of ugliness and memorial to Victorian bad taste was erected in the main street of the city[Coordinative apposition: the two noun phrases—this temple of ugliness & memorial to Victorian bad taste—have the same reference, referring to one entity(a statue)]
- This temple of Vishnu and that temple of Lord Shiva are fantastic indeed. (coordination)
- The temple of Vishnu and that of Lord Shiva are fantastic indeed(coordination)
- His younger brother and the subsequent editor of his collected papers was/were with him at deathbed. [ambiguous: either a singular or plural verb according as the brother and editor are one person or two: Quirk & Greenbaum page 178]
- Good and bad taste are inculcated by example. [PL]

Concord with the correlatives (*either...or*, *neither...nor*, *not only...but also*, etc): When each unit of the coordination is singular, the verb is singular and when each unit of the coordination is plural, the verb is plural. But when one unit is singular and the other is plural, we must use proximity agreement. Examples:

- Either John or his sister has gone to London. [both conjuncts are singular: singular verb]
- Either the mangoes or the apples are to be distributed among the children. [both conjuncts are plural: plural verb]
- Either John or his sisters have gone to London. [the nearest subject noun phrase is plural: plural verb]
- Either the girls or the boy has gone to London. [the nearest subject noun phrase is singular: singular verb]
- If either David or Janet come, they will want a drink.[plural verb: According to Longman Dictionary (327), *either...or* and *neither...nor* are usually followed by a plural pronoun and a plural verb, except in formal writing]
- If either David or Janet comes, he or she will want a drink[singular verb: in formal writing]
- Either your brakes are at fault or your eyesight is.

- Either my friend or I have used the car.
- Either my friend or I ?am going to Digha.[According to Huddleston & Pullum, here the first person form am should be avoided as it sounds awkward .]
- He hasn't arrived, nor has his wife.
- I wasn't there and neither was Mary /neither were the children.
- Neither my father nor I were there[plural verb: informal writing]
- Neither my father nor I was there.[singular verb]
- Neither he nor his wife have arrived. [plural verb: notional concord: *neither he nor his wife* can be interpreted as a union of negatives—both(not—he) and (not -his wife)]
- Neither he nor his wife has arrived. [singular verb: proximity agreement]
- Is either /neither of the factories in operation yet? [According to Longman Dictionary, when *either* and *neither* are used as pronouns and followed by a plural noun, they usually take a singular verb in formal writing. But in speech and informal writing a plural verb is used.]
- Are either/ neither of the teams playing this week?
- Neither Rani nor Sani is/are here yet. [Neither +SG nor + SG=SG/PL]
- Neither the twins nor Rani are here yet. [neither + PL nor +SG=PL]
- Neither Rani nor the twins are here yet. [neither + SG nor PL=PL]
- Neither the twins nor the boys are here yet. [neither + PL nor + PL=PL]
- Not only has he turned up late, he also has forgotten his books. [proximity concord: the coordinating correlatives *not ...but* and *not only/just/merely...but(also/even)* behave like *or* with respect to number concord.]
- Not only do the nurses want a pay increase, they want reduced hours as well. [proximity concord]
- Not only he but his wife has arrived. [proximity concord: singular verb—singular noun(his wife)]
- Not only was it raining all day at the wedding but also the band was late.
- Not only did she forget my birthday, but she also didn't even apologise for forgetting it.
- Not only one but all of us were invited [proximity concord]
- Not one but all of us were invited. [proximity concord]
- Not just the students but even their teacher is enjoying the film [proximity concord]

According to Prof Biber (p. 183), one of the subject noun phrases which are coordinated by *OR* is plural, the verb takes plural concord. When the subject noun phrases are coordinated by *neither-nor* and when each of the phrases is singular, the verb takes singular concord and if each of them is plural, the verb takes plural concord. We also find examples of plural concord with the coordinated noun phrases in the singular. If one of the coordinated phrases is plural, the verb takes plural concord:

- In fact, it is likely to prove “immeasurably worse” than either Conservatives or Labour have realised. [plural concord]
- Neither Aditya nor Kausiki seconds the proposal. [singular concord]
- Neither the guns nor the bullets are necessary [plural concord]
- Neither John nor Mary were present at the meeting [plural concord]
- Neither the man nor the women were happy. [plural concord]

If *or*, *either-or* and *neither-nor* are used to coordinate different grammatical persons, we find proximity agreement—agreement with the closest noun phrase:

- You or he is weak.
- He or you are weak.
- You or I am successful.
- Either I or he is honest.
- Either he or I am honest.
- Either he or you are dishonest.
- Either I or my cook has gone there.
- Either my cook or I have gone there.
- Neither John nor I have helped them.
- Neither I nor the workers have succeeded.
- Neither the workers nor he has gone there.

Concord with *none* but in subject position:

- None but (=only) the brave deserve the fair.
- None but the top-tier tickets remain for sale.
- None but the best ingredients are used in our products.
- None other than Mrs Obama was her first customer.
- There were none left.

None is most often treated as plural in its use in sentences such as *None but his most loyal supporters believe (*believes) his story.*

Concord with *one* or *two* : There are some mixed expressions which follow the principle of proximity in having plural concord e.g. *one or two*, etc.. Likewise, *one and* plus a fraction or percentage take plural verb because the notion of plural applies not to at least two but to more than one. Examples:

- I'd like to make one or two suggestions.
- We've had one or two problems—nothing serious.
- One or two reasons were suggested. [plural verb: proximity agreement]
- Let us decide between one and two alternatives. [plural number: proximity agreement]
- One and a half years have passed since we last met. [plural verb: proximity agreement]
- A year and a half has passed [singular verb because the conjoint phrase is treated as *a period of a year and a half*. We also find proximity agreement]

Concord with Indefinite expressions as subject phrases (e.g. *none*, *some*, *any*, *half*, etc.)

- No money has been spent on the building. [singular verb]
- None (of the money) has been spent on the work. [singular verb: here noncount noun *money* is implied]
- None of the money has been spent on the work [singular verb: here noncount noun *money* is present/overtly stated]
- Some sugar has been added.
- Some of the sugar has been added.
- No people of that name live here [plural verb]
- No person of that name lives here [singular verb]
- Some (of the apples) have been placed on the table [plural verb]
- All (of the apples) have been stored [plural verb]
- Half (of the apples) have been stored [plural verb]
- Hardly any (of the apples) have been stored [plural verb]
- None (of the apples) has/have been sorted out [singular/plural verb: prescriptive grammarians insist on using formal concord (singular concord) but due to notional concord, plural verb is used.]
- The three persons have turned up, and either is welcome/but neither is welcome. [singular verb]
- Either of them/neither were accorded a warm welcome. (both were (not) accorded) [A singular verb is generally used with *either/neither* but in informal English, a plural verb is used if *either/neither* is followed by 'of + a plural noun' owing to notional agreement and proximity agreement]
- None of them have been welcome.
- Nobody in the class is allowed to leave school without prior permission. [singular verb]
- Nobody, not even the teachers, was listening to the music [singular concord: formal concord]
- Nobody, not even the teachers, were listening to the music [plural concord: proximity concord]
- Every/each member of the vast crowd of 50000 people was pleased [formal concord: singular verb]
- Every/each member of the vast crowd of 50000 people were pleased [plural verb: proximity concord]
- Everybody/anybody of the group of 80 persons was/were happy
- Every one/ any one of the vast crowd of 60000 people was/were delighted.
- None of these suggestions is very helpful.
- None of the furniture was out of place.
- None of this seems to have affected him. [*none of* can be used in front of a singular or plural pronoun.]

- We had none of these at home.
- None of his books have been published in England.[
When we use *none of* in front of a plural noun or pronoun, you can use either a plural or singular form of a verb after it. The singular form is more formal. When we use *none of* in front of an uncountable noun or a singular pronoun, we use a singular form of a verb after it.]
- None of them is real.
- None of the wheat was ruined.
- Yet none of this has seriously affected business.
- There were none left.
- None of those is a good example. None are even acceptable.

When the determiners and the pronouns are used with noncount /uncountable nouns, the form of the verb is singular. But when they are used with plural count nouns, the form of the verb is plural:

- No money has been spent.
- None of the money has been spent.
- No brand of cigarette is harmless.
- Some cement has been used.
- Some of the cement has been used.
- No people of the village have gone to the fair.
- Some of the books are put on the shelf.

Concord with *more than one* & *one more*:

- More than one toy was/*were bought. [singular concord though notionally plural]
- One more application has/*have been received than we had expected. [singular concord though notionally plural]

Concord with noun/pronoun as antecedent in relative clauses: In sentences with relative clauses/cleft sentences, the verb after the relative pronoun subject must agree with its antecedent. Examples:

- It is I who am/*are/*is to do my duty.
- It is me who is/*am/*are at fault.[here the antecedent is in accusative case and so the first person property is not carried over to *who*.]
- It is I who am at fault.
- It is you (in the nominative case) who are to blame.
- It is Radford(third person singular number) who is writing a book on English syntax.
- It is they(third person plural) who are expressing their grievances.
- It is me who is to blame[here *me* is in the objective case. This is found in informal English]
- It is you who is to blame[here *you* has singular reference]
- I want the pen of Sajal which is very good. [*pen* is the antecedent of the relative pronoun]
- Our Father, who is in Heaven.[he who is in Heaven. Note the use of vocative]

Concord depending on the generality or uniqueness of the subject noun phrase in *one-of* constructions: If the subject noun phrase denotes generality, it takes singular concord and if the subject noun phrase denotes uniqueness, it takes plural concord.

- Charlatanry is one of the many words in English that **are** of French origin. [=Of many words in English that **are** of French origin, charlatanry is one---Quirk et al.]
- Charlatanry is one of the common vices that **is** particularly contemptible. [of the common vices, charlatanry is one that **is** particularly contemptible]
- Mandrita is one of the girls whom the teacher loved very much. [here the relative clause modifies *girls*. Here *girls* is the head of the noun phrase. There is a set of girls whom the teacher loved very much. Mandrita is one of the set.]

- One of the girls whom the teacher loved most is Mandrita.[here *one* is the fused determiner head of the noun phrase. The relative clause modifies *one*]
- He is one of those people who always want to have the last word. [plural concord]
- He is one of those people who always wants to have the last word [singular concord: here semantically the relative clause modifies *people* but we find singular concord because the singular override is most common when the relative clause follows *those* or *those* + noun.]

Concord with adverbs & prepositional phrases as subject: If prepositional phrases and adverbs operate as subject, the verb takes singular concord:

- In the mornings is healthy for me.
- Slowly does it!
- From here to London is over fifty miles.
- After the exams is the time to relax.
- Through the trees is the quickest way.

[N.B.: According to Quirk et al, in certain restricted contexts (all informal) prepositional phrases, adverbials and adverbial clauses can operate as subject if the two conditions are fulfilled: (a) the adverbial is a fragment of an understood clause, or (b) the sentence can be related to one with *prop it* :

- Slowly is exactly how he speaks (=Speaking slowly is exactly how ... –Quirk et al, page 736)
- Out on the lake is splendid (=A trip out on the lake is splendid)
- Whenever you are ready is fine (=it is fine whenever...)
- Is after the show soon enough?
- Because Sally wants to leave doesn't mean that we have to.

According to Quirk et al, an adverb may function as subject in the stereotyped construction with the predicate *does it*. But we cannot change the verb form or use a prepositional phrase:

- Carefully/easy/gently/slowly does it.
- *Carefully/easy/gently/slowly did it---incorrect
- *With meticulous care does it---incorrect

Concord with Adjective Phrases: When an adjective phrase remains in subject position, the verb takes singular concord:

- Rather too big for your boots is what you are, my boy.

Concord with Verbless Clauses: The verb with the verbless clauses in the subject position usually takes singular concord:

- Wall-to-wall carpets[pl] in every room is their dream. (= Having wall-to-wall carpets in every room is their dream.)(singular concord]
- Bicycles in heavy traffic is/*are sheer madness. (=to have bicycles in heavy traffic is sheer madness) [Pattern: SVC --here we find the bias of the syntax of the sentence towards clausal grammar and we find the consequent singular number concord]
- Are/*is bicycles wise in heavy traffic? [Pattern: absence of SVC--plural concord according to proximity principle. *The bicycles are wise—Incorrect due to semantic anomaly]

Concord with the noun phrase whose second constituent operates to emphasize the preceding constituent: There are noun phrases where one constituent operates to emphasize the sense of the preceding constituent and they are perfect synonyms Examples:

- First and foremost is action on international humanitarian law.
- The strength and power of India is praiseworthy.

Concord with *there*: The number of the verb depends on the number of the notional subject in clauses beginning with *there*. However, where the subject is compound, it is common in speech to use the singular. With compound subjects in which all the coordinate words are singular, a singular verb often occurs, although the plural may also be used. When a compound subject contains both singular and plural words, the verb usually agrees with the subject closest to the verb, although a plural verb sometimes occurs regardless, especially if the compound has more than two elements. In speaking and in some informal writing, we use *there's* even when it refers to more than one. This use could be considered incorrect in formal writing or in an examination. In formal English the number of the verb depends on the subject that follows.:

- There are patients in the waiting room.
- There is a child waiting
- There are several children waiting.
- There's a police car and an ambulance outside.
- There was (or were) a horse and a cow in the pasture.
- There were staff meetings and a press conference daily.
- There was (or were) a glass, two plates, two cups, and a teapot on the shelf.
- There's three other people who are still to come.
- There's lots of cars in the car park.
- There's hundreds of people on the waiting list.
- There is a pen.[After *there* the verb agrees with its complement]
- There are some pens.
- Has(sg) there been any serious complaint(sg) from the members?
- Have (pl)there been any serious complaints(pl) from the members?

According to Paul Roberts (*Understanding English*, p.279-280), in Choice English, when *there* introduces the clause, the verb usually agrees with the following subject: *There is a banana. There are two bananas.* We feel a strong tendency to construe *there* as the subject and consequently to use a singular verb, whatever the number of the following substantive. Though Choice English resists the tendency before a simple plural noun, it frequently employs a singular verb when the following subject is compound:

- And for those who do not, there is[sg] bridge and parlour games and company of their own kind with the best of all hostesses... (Ann Leighton, *Atlantic*)
- There is[sg] also a camera department and a framing shop... ("Mr Harper," *Harper's*)
- Rent is[sg] nineteen dollars a month during the wintertime, when there's heat and hot water... (*Saturday Evening Post*).
- It happens when there is[sg] a high wind and heavy seas. (*Saturday Evening Post*)

Concord with *who*: According to Quirk et al, a subject which is not clearly semantically plural requires a singular verb and the singular concord is used in neutral circumstances, where no positive indication of plurality is present. They are of the opinion that interrogative *who* and *what* as subjects normally take a singular verb even when the speaker has reason to believe that more than one person or entity is involved:

- Who is going there?
- Who have not taken their seats? [plural verb is used if other words in the clause indicate that a plural subject is expected in the answer]

Concord with literary works in subject position: If plural and coordinate phrases are used as names, titles, quotations, etc. the verb takes singular concord. It is to be noted that if titles of some literary works which are collections of stories, etc, they may be regarded as singular or plural.:

- *Crime and punishment* is a novel by the Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky.
- *The Brothers Karamazov* is his masterpiece.
- *Great Expectations* is a novel by Charles Dickens.
- *The Cedars* had a huge field.
- *Senior citizen* means people over sixty.
- The expression 'senior citizens' means people over sixty.
- *The Canterbury Tales* exists/exist in many manuscripts.

- *The red pen and the blue tables* is a coordinate noun phrase.
- *Star Wars* is a successful film.
- *The New York Times* is factual but dryly.

Concord with zero plurals: When zero plurals are used as subject, they may be singular or plural. This is manifested through pronouns or pronoun reference:

- The sheep(singular) fled from the pasture, didn't it?
- The sheep(plural) fled from the pasture, didn't they?

Concord in clauses with verbs in Subjunctive mood: We find three types of subjunctives: past/were-subjunctive, present/mandative subjunctive and formulaic subjunctive. The past subjunctive is used to express hypothetical conditions found in hypothetical conditional clauses and in other clauses expressing hypothetical meanings. The past subjunctive is found in formal style but in nonformal style, the past subjunctive can be replaced by hypothetical past or indicative forms. The following are examples of **past subjunctive**:

- It is time they went/they were leaving.
- It is high time he left.
- It is time I/he/she/it was/*were going.
- I wish it weren't true.
- I wish he were here tonight.
- He wished Emily were with him.
- I wish I were you!
- I wish I were younger.
- Suppose he were lost.
- I'd rather I were in bed.
- I wish she were not married(=I wish she was not married---hypothetical past).
- If only I were not so nervous(= If only I was not so nervous---hypothetical past).[when if only expresses a wish about the future , we can use the present tense: If only the train gets in on time, we will just catch the two o'clock bus]
- If she were here, she would speak on my behalf (=If she was (hypothetical past) here, she would speak on my behalf).
- The stuffed dog barked as if it were a real one(=The stuffed dog barked as if it was(hypothetical past) a real one).
- He behaves as though he were the owner of the shop.
- Suppose(imperative) he were lost(=Suppose he is/was(hypothetical past) lost, what would you do?).
- I'd rather I were in bed(=I'd rather I was(hypothetical past) in bed).
- To think that my mother wrote all those books and I never knew!
- To think we believed her !
- He orders me about as if I were his wife.
- To think I was once a millionaire!
- Imagine(imperative) your child played truant.[hypothetical meaning]

The **present /mandative subjunctive** can be introduced by certain verbs/nouns/adjectives/conjunctions. The mandative constructions express an obligation, recommendation, suggestion, requirement or wish. The verb is not inflected for the third person in the present tense. The verbs include *advise, agree, ask, beg, command, decide, decree, demand, direct, insist, intend, move, order, plead, pray, prefer, propose, recommend, request, require, rule, stipulate, suggest, urge, & vote*. The nouns include *advice, demand, injunction, order, recommendation, request, insistence & wish*. The adjectives include *advisable, anxious, crucial, desirable, eager, essential, mandatory, preferable, important, necessary, willing, & vital*. The conjunctions include *in order that* and *on condition that*. In British English, we most frequently find the use of *should + infinitive* or ordinary present and past tenses: *He suggested that a petition should be drawn up; It is essential every child should have the same educational opportunities*. Examples:

- They advise that he carry/*carries a passport with him at all times. [base form of the verb]
- He agreed that we need more time and resources.
- The manager asked that she supervise recent developments.

- She begged that she be allowed to go.
- She begged that her child write the examination.
- The commission commanded that work on the building cease.
- It was decided that he resign/should resign.
- The authority decreed that she have not the right to vote.
- The UN has demanded that the terrorist leave the country.
- The judge directed that the mother be given custody of the children.
- He insists that she come (=He insists that she should come)
- I intend that he see it (=I intend that he should see it)
- The court ordered that the doctor prepare a psychological report.
- Quinn pleaded that Daley crack down harder, that the police open up.
- The Lord prayed that his child do the work.
- She would have preferred that none of this take place.
- She proposed that the Government ban the book.
- Our teacher proposed that the student participate in the function.
- I recommend that he see a lawyer (=I recommend that he should see a lawyer).
- He requested that no one comment on her decision until the next meeting.
- The judge ruled that she have/*has custody of the children.
- State laws stipulate that public education be free.
- It has been suggested that the bright child take/should take their exams early.
- The report urged (=strongly suggest) that all children be taught to swim.
- He urged that a referendum should be held by December.
- Investigators urged that safety procedures at the site should be improved.
- Investigators urged that the man supervise safety procedures at the site/the man should supervise them.
- The meeting voted that the town council should reject the scheme.
- They voted that the accused beg for mercy.
- The reporter refused their demand that he reveal/*reveals his sources. [base form of the verb is correct without -s inflection]
- Worse, Joe heard that Johnson had ordered that all transactions between Defense and State be channeled through him.
- Congress has voted/decided/decreed/insisted that the present law continue/*continues to operate.
- They ignored the order that the drains be cleaned regularly.
- We are making no recommendation that the lady use/*uses/should use Standard English.
- Anderson repeated his request that we postpone/*postponed the meeting.
- We are making no recommendation that children should use Standard English.
- We were surprised by his insistence that they discuss the problem.
- It is important that Tina be present at the meeting today.
- It is essential that every child have/*has the same educational opportunities. [Swan, Sec.232]
- We felt it desirable that he not leave/* do not/*does not school before eighteen. [negative subjunctive]
- It was important that Roni contact/*contacts Rana as soon as possible.
- Our advice is that the company invest/*invests in new equipment. [Swan, Sec 232]
- It is crucial that the problem be tackled immediately.
- It is mandatory that he wear/*wears a helmet while riding the bike.
- It is necessary that she wear/*wears a formal dress at the party.
- It is vital that he keep/*keeps accurate records.
- They expressed the wish that she accept/*accepts/*accepted the award.
- Come winter, we'll have to pay a good deal more for vegetables and fruit. ['When winter comes, ... ']

There are some fixed phrases where subjunctives are used. They may be with or without inversion. These are examples of **formulaic subjunctive**:

- Teachers must put the brakes on, as it were, when they notice students looking puzzled.
- If he doesn't want to be involved, then so be it.
- If we have to pay Rs 40,000, then so be it (=we cannot do anything to change it)
- Building a new children's home will cost a lot of money but, be that as it may (=even if what you say is true), there is an urgent need for the facility.

- Far be it from me(=I certainly would not) to tell you how to run your life.
- Far be it from me (= I would not presume; on no account) to tell you what to do.
- We can take a second car, if need be (=if necessary), to fit everyone in.
- I shall be there tonight come what may (=whatever happens).
- It's always good to know that, come what may(=whatever happens), your job is safe.
- If I were you, Mrs Gretchen, I just wouldn't worry about it.
- Good night everyone, and God bless you(=may good things happen to you).
- Maybe you'll end up as a lawyer, like me.” “God/heaven forbid/*forbids(=used to say that we hope that something will not happen)!
- God save/*saves the Queen!
- Long live the king!
- Heaven help us!
- Suffice it to say we lost.
- Long live anarchy!
- (God) Bless you!
- God save the Queen!

Concord with some fixed phrases:

As follows (* *as follow*) is the established form of the idiom regardless of whether the noun that precedes it is singular or plural: *The regulations are as follows*.

- The winners are *as follows* - Woods, Smith, and Cassidy.
- These targets may be analysed on the basis of buying process roles, *as follows*.• Using the terminology derived from holography, we can reinterpret these waves *as follows*.
- *The following* is a summary of events. [it is used with either a singular or a plural verb, depending on whether we are talking about one thing or person or several things or people)
- *The following* have been chosen to take part: Watts, Hodges and Lennox.

Concord and Distributive number: The term *distributive* denotes a word or phrase relating to individual members of a class separately, not jointly. According to Quirk et al, the distributive plural is used in a plural phrase to refer to a set of entities matched individually with individual entities in another set. We find distributive plural concord. The distributive plural is used when the subject is plural. Although the distributive plural is the norm, the distributive singular is used to focus on individual instances. The distributive singular is usually used with idioms and metaphors:

- Have you all brought your pencils? [Each has a pencil]
- The children all had such eager faces. [Each child had only one face]
- The children raised their hands/their hand. [distributive plural/distributive singular]
- A few children have understanding fathers/an understanding father.
- We all have good houses/a good house.
- Their houses need cleaning.
- Their house need cleaning.
- The exercise is not good for their heads/head.
- They kept an open mind/*minds.
- We vented our spleen/*spleens on the impudent person.
- They cannot put their finger/*fingers on what's wrong.
- Students were asked to name their favourite game. [here the distributive singular is used to avoid ambiguity. Each of the students had only one favourite game]
- Students were asked to name their favourite games. [=Each of the students had more than one favourite game.]
- Children must be accompanied by a parent. [=each of the children must be accompanied by only one parent.]
- Children must be accompanied by parents. [=each of the children must be accompanied by more than one parent]

Concord & Gender: Personal pronouns (3rd person singular) must agree with its antecedent in respect of gender. Examples:

- The King declared himself satisfied. [masculine]
- The Queen declared herself satisfied. [feminine]
- The machine had switched itself off. [neuter]
- The dog has lost his/its bone.
- The bitch has lost her/its bone.
- Tom has lost his/*its bone. [Tom is the name of the dog and a proper noun and the use of the neuter pronoun is not permitted]
- The baby has lost her/its cap.
- Ann has lost her/*its cap.
- Her daughter has lost her/*its cap.
- This country India has occupied her/its important place in the world. [when countries are looked upon as political entities, *she/her* can be used as an alternant of *it/its* respectively. But when they are used as geographical entities, *she* cannot be used.]
- From the map of India, we can find that it/*she lies to the north of the Indian ocean.
- India has won its/their/her victory over England.
- The Titanic sank on her/its maiden voyage. [name of ships and of cars]
- It/She is a beauty, this Mercedes.
- Down she (the tree being felled) comes.
- Here she (bus or ship) is at last.
- The bull showed his/its head. [when we want to encode the sex of the referent, we use *he/she/her/his*. We obligatorily use *he/she*, if the animal is referred to by a proper name]
- The cow is lying on her/its back.
- The baby has lost his/her/its cap.
- The dog is eating his/her/its biscuits.
- My tutor wanted me to accompany him/her. [tutor is a dual-gender noun but it does not encode any information about the sex of the person, so the following sentence is not ambiguous: *My tutor wants to see me.*]
- Everyone has cast his or her/her or his vote. [disjunctive coordination]
- Everyone has cast his /her or her/his vote. [composite]
- Everyone has cast their vote. [singular *they*]
- Everyone agreed that he or she should apply him-or herself. [sometimes we find sex-neutral *he* and basic *he*(male)]
- Everyone agreed that he/she should apply him-or herself[disjunctive coordination].
- Everyone agreed that (s)he [composite form] should apply him-or herself.
- Everyone agreed that s/he [composite form] should apply him-or herself.

[N.B.: According to Pullum & Huddleston, it is used non-referentially in talking of humans as a whole because humans are being likened to other animals and the likeness is reflected in the use of the same pronoun. Examples of dual-gender nouns are *actor, atheist, dwarf, friend, hero, manager, narrator, nurse, parent, person, poet* and *writer*. Examples of triple-gender nouns are *baby, blackbird, child, dog, elephant, frog, goat, horse, infant, lion, octopus*, and *snake*. *Parent* is not ambiguous as it can be synonymous with *mother* or *father*.]

Concord between reflexive pronouns & their antecedents: It is the general rule that personal pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person and number.

- I have not been myself for weeks (=I have not felt well).
- Have you hurt yourself?
- You don't seem quite yourself today (= you do not seem well or do not seem as happy as usual).
- Enjoy yourselves!
- No one could have blamed themselves for that.
- Everybody present there behaved themselves.

- The lady is making a sweater for herself. [here the concord is between the subject and the object to the preposition]
- I wrote to them about myself.
- I wrote to my sister about herself [here the concord relation is between the object and the object to the preposition.]
- You can try it out for yourselves.
- Agnes looked at herself in the mirror. [here the subject and the object are the same]
- Agnes looked at her in the mirror. [here the subject is different from the object]
- He cut himself on the broken glass.
- She made herself a cup of tea and sat down in front of the television.
- Parents often blame themselves for the way their children behave.
- You have missed your chance. [This sentence is ambiguous between two interpretations: singular interpretation and plural interpretation]
- The Governor, says he, will visit the Red Fort tomorrow. [in stories, the subject t often comes after said, says, or say when it follows the actual words spoken, unless it is a pronoun.: *'Hello!' she said ; That was marvellous,' said Daniel.*]
- She was telling John some truths about himself.
- Everyone promised to behave themselves. [Singular *they* is said to have two reflexive forms: *themselves* and *themselves*. *Everyone* implies a plural set.]
- Someone locked themselves in the room.

[N.B.: According to Huddleston & Pullum, there are two pronouns **you**, a singular one with *yourself* as its reflexive form and a plural one with *yourselves* as its reflexive form. It is to be noted that the distinction is marked only in the reflexive.]

Concord between pronouns & their antecedents: We know that pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person and number. As the use of sex-neutral has declined, we have begun using singular *they*. This is found with such antecedents as *anyone, everyone, someone, no one* and also with common nouns. Examples:

- Have any of you brought your camera?
- If a student does not hand in his or her paper today, he or she will not be able to continue the course.
- Everyone brought their partner to the party.
- (formal) Everyone brought his or her partner to the party.
- Someone's left their bag behind.
- If anyone would like further information about the dogs, they should call Canine Rescue on 0502 75257.
- If anyone would like further information about the dogs, he or she should call Canine Rescue on 0502 75257.) [formal]
- The *patient* should be told at the outset how much *they* will be required to pay.
- But a journalist should not be forced to reveal their sources.
- A friend of mine has asked me to go over and help them with an assignment. [here the speaker uses *they* to avoid indicating the sex of the friend]
- Let me know if your father(male) or your brother(male) changes their/his mind. [disjunctive coordination]
- Let me know if your brother(male) or your sister(female) changes their/*his mind. [disjunctive coordination]
- Either your father (male) or your mother(female) has perjured themselves/*himself/*herself/*themselves.
- The committee has not made up its mind. [the collective noun is singular here]
- The committee have not made up their mind. [the collective noun is plural here]
- The committee has not made up their/*its mind [singular verb with plural pronoun is possible but plural verb with singular pronoun is not possible]
- A group of boys are writing their names.
- A group of boys was writing their /*its names.
- A group of bystanders are behaving themselves rather badly.

- A group of bystanders was behaving itself/*themselves rather badly. [singular verb with singular reflexive is possible but singular verb with plural reflexive is not possible.]
- One of the girls is behaving herself badly. [partitive]
- One of the girls has forgotten to take her lunch.
- One of the children has forgotten their lunch. [here not specifying the sex]
- A group of you is behaving itself /*yourselves badly. [in such syntactic constructions, the pronoun takes its person and number from the partitive oblique]
- A group of you are behaving yourselves/*themselves badly.[Vide Pullum & Huddleston]
- A group of you has received your results sent to you by email.
- A group of us are preparing ourselves for the ensuing election.
- A group of us is preparing itself/*ourselves for the ensuing election.
- A group of us has received our results sent to us by email.
- One of us has taken her/his/their/our dinner.
- One of us has hurt himself/herself/themself/themselves/*ourselves.
- One of you has sold her/his/their/your/*our car
- One of you has hurt himself/herself/themself/themselves/yourself.
- Jim and I have had *our* applications rejected.
- You and Jim have had *your* applications rejected.
- Either Jim or I must repair our/his/her/their car.
- You or Jim must repair your/his/her/their car.
- Either Jim or I may find ourselves in the place. [such construction should be avoided]
- You or Jim may find yourself/yourselves in the place. [such construction should be avoided]
- Jim or I must move my car. [only one car involved]
- * Jim or I may have my application knocked back. [the antecedent of *my* is *I*, not *Jim* or *I*]
- Jim or I may have our applications knocked back. [two applications involved]

Concord with indefinite pronoun *one*: If *one* operates as subject, the same pronoun is used for subsequent references:

- One should keep one's promises.[BrE]
- One should keep his promises.[AmE]
- One should choose one's friends carefully.[BrE]
- One should choose his friends carefully. [AmE]
- One should never criticize if one is not sure of one's facts.
- One gets the impression that they disapprove.
- One has an obligation to one's friends.
- I wondered whether there might, after all, be some truth in the old chestnut that one's school days are the happiest of one's life.

[N.B.: We use *it*, *that* and *this* to indicate the person mentioned in the context:

- Somebody moved the chair. *It* was Rana.
- Hello! *This* is Sana. Is *that* Tina?

Concord in Tag Questions: The subject in the tag must corresponds to the subject in the stem. In *Rina is going there, isn't she?* “ Rina is going there” is the stem and “isn't she?” is the tag question. We usually use *they* in subsequent tag questions, when indefinite pronouns are present in the clause as subject:

- *Everyone* is taking drugs now, aren't *they*?
- *Nobody* is taking drugs, are *they*?
- I'm late again, aren't I?/*amn't I?
- That is an interesting question, *isn't it*?/*isn't that?
- Hurry up (emphatic/urgent imperative), *will you*![indicating urgency]
- Give me a glass of water, *would you*?[polite request]
- Switch off the lights, *will you*?[polite request]

- Let's discuss the matter later, *shall we?*[suggestion]
- We were supposed to meet outside of the cinema hall, *remember?*[here *remember ?* is the shortened form of the tag question "You remember that, don't you?"----Reminder]
- You are supposed to be here at five o'clock, *you know?* [here *you know?* Is the shortened form of the tag question " You know that ,don't you ?".....Admonition/reminder]
- You solve it like this, *see?*[here *see?* is the shortened form of " You see that, don't you?"---instruction or request for feedback]
- You know what I am discussing, right?[here *right?* is the shortened form of "That's right, isn't it?".....request for feedback]
- Oh! That's a wonderful picture, isn't it! (=what a wonderful picture that is!)
- Is this a wonderful thought, *or what!* (*or what!* is a tag)
- Do you love it, *or what!*
- Was he honest, *or what!*
- I think this is the best pen, *don't you?*
- I love football, *don't you?*
- You fell on your back, *did you?*[Positive stem + positive tag]
- I'll tell you roughly, *shall I?*
- Come into the kitchen, *will you ?*
- See that she gets safely back, *won't you?*
- Pass me the newspaper, *will you, please.* [F.T.Wood, page 143]
- Don't tell Rana, *will you?*
- One cannot be too honest, *can one?*
- He used to take exercise, *didn't he?*
- We must not be late, *must we?*
- You can get drowned, *can't you?*
- Let's have a game of cricket, *shall we ?* [suggestion]
- Have another cup of tea, *will you?*[invitation/suggestion]
- Have another cup of tea, *won't you?* [urgency]
- Everyone cannot stand first, *can they?*
- Everyone cheered excitedly, *didn't they?*
- None of them solved the sum, *did they?*
- None of us knew the way, *did we?*
- Some of us wanted to remain there, *didn't we?* [here the speaker includes himself]
- Some of us lost the way on the return journey, *didn't they?*[the speaker does not include himself]
- Some of you are learning English, *aren't you?*
- Use your common sense, *can't you?*[impatience with the force of a rebuke]

Concord between Relative pronouns & their antecedents: *Who* and *which* are relative pronouns. *Who* in relative clauses, restrictive and non-restrictive, refers to people and sometimes pet animals. *Which* in relative clauses, restrictive and non-restrictive, refers to animals and things. Examples:

- The man(SG) who met his friend was honest.
- The man(SG) who was honest contributed lavishly to the mission.
- The men(PL) who were honest led a peaceful life.
- The woman who studied hard succeeded in life.
- The women who studied hard succeeded in life.
- The toy which was very attractive was bought yesterday.
- The toys which were very attractive were bought yesterday.
- The baby/infant has lost her/his/its cap. [not specifying the sex]
- The baby/infant who has lost her/his cap.
- The baby/infant which has lost its cap.
- The dog has lost her/his/its bone.
- The dog who/which stole the bone was very hungry.
- Tom (name of the dog) who/*which stole the bone was very hungry. [the use of who indicates a greater amount of interest or empathy]

- Tom was wagging his/*its tail.
- The dog who wounded his owner/which wounded its owner/which wounded his owner. [*which* can operate as antecedent to *he* or *she*—Huddleston & Pullum, p499]
- The ship which/*who was on its maiden voyage way behind schedule. [although *she* is used with ships, buses, etc. *who* in relative clauses cannot be used with them.]
- The committee *who* have completed *their/*his* report must submit it soon. [human collectives can take *who*]
- The committee which/**who* have completed *its/their/*his* report must submit it soon.

Concord with *as well as*, *in addition to*, *with*, *along with* & *together with*: Some prepositions have a similar meaning to *and*, but the linking does not make the subject plural. So also with other prepositions that do not resemble *and* in meaning: The noun phrase in the subject position with and in brackets does not normally make the subject plural:

- He as well as his friends was honest.
- He along with his friends was honest.
- He together with his friends was honest.
- He with his friends is buying a racing car.
- The kitchen (and of course its dining room) faces(sg) due west.
- The house between the two bungalows is(sg) empty.
- The sidewalk, in addition to the driveway, needs(sg) to be repaired.
- One child after another has(sg) complained of the cold.
- Perseverance rather than intelligence ensures(sg) success in this type of position.

As with *and*, *or* may link units that refer to the same thing. The number of the verb follows the first unit:

- London's green belt, or the parks and farmlands that encircle London, is(sg) gradually being eroded by major construction companies.

Plural phrases of measure or quantity may be viewed as a single unit, in which case a singular verb is used:

- Five miles was(sg) (That distance was) as far as they went that day.
- Ten dollars is(sg) (That amount is) the price of the cheapest ticket'.
- Ten years is(sg) (That period is) the maximum sentence for that offence.
- Two hundred people was(sg) (That number was) all that the room could hold.

According to Paul Roberts, sometimes the idea of plurality is dominant and a plural verb is used. When the subject is a number denoting a fixed quantity of something, the verb is most often in the singular:

- Six days have[pl] flitted by BUT: Six days is[sg] a very long time.
- Thirty miles were[pl] crossed by us BUT: Thirty miles is[sg] a great distance for us to cross.
- Five years were spent by us in Paris. BUT: Five years spent in the Sundarbans was a long and boring time.
- The first fifty years are the hardest.

Concord with Phrase in apposition: A phrase in apposition does not make the subject plural and must agree with the preceding noun or noun phrase in number. In other words, if the subject is singular, the phrase in apposition must be singular.:

- Radford, my neighbour, is an excellent and eminent professor.
- Rani, mother of four children, is a noble mother.
- My friend and fellow scoutmaster, Jefferson Brewster, is[sg] going with me. [the rule is that when two parts of a compound subject name the same person or thing, the verb is singular]
- The living room, the biggest room in the house, looks out on to a beautiful garden. (The living room and the biggest room in the house are the same room.)
- Their youngest child, Timothy, is very musical.

Concord with Complex Subjects: The number of the verb depends on the number of the head of the noun phrase in the subject position. The verb must agree with the head of the phrase. In *a lot of books*, *books* is the head and in *a book of answers*, *book* is the head. Here *a lot of* is a determiner. It is to be noted that lengthy post-modification with plural nouns can trigger proximity agreement in spite of a singular head:

- A book of letters is very interesting.
- A lot of letters are very interesting.
- Amid the crisis, the status of foreign nationals and aid-workers are uncertain.

When noun phrases operate as quantifiers can take singular or plural concord. Quantifiers like *a group of* / *a set of* / *a range of* / *a series of* take both singular and plural concord. Informal quantifiers like the following normally take plural concord: *a batch of*, *a bunch of*, *a handful of*, *a heap of*, *a mass of*, *a pile of*, *a rash of*, *a score of*, *a spate of*.

- A total of 150 cars were banked up behind the accident.
- A total of 150 cars was banked up behind the accident.
- Now a rash of scruffy little shops border(pl) one side of the street.
- A *spate* of books on the subject have come out recently.
- There was a *spate* of corporate mergers in the 1980s.
- There has been a *rash* of robberies in the city this summer.
- There are a *ton* of great Prime Day fishing deals still going on.
- There are a *ton* of great Prime Day fishing deals still going on.
- There are *tons* of other wide-leg pants to shop on sale at Amazon right now.
- There wasn't a *ton* of panic.
- There was a mass of people around the club entrance.
- Soon afterwards, as in the Western Middle Ages, there were masses of peasant serfs, and great feudal States.
- On his desk is a mass of books and papers. [inversion]
- There's masses of work for her to do.
- A mass of cold air is coming from the north.
- A huge mass of material has been organized into a clear narrative.
- There were masses of people in the shops yesterday.
- There is masses of cake left over from the party.[oxford dictionary]

Pronoun Concord: Personal pronouns in the clause must agree with the following verb, antecedent nouns and subsequent determiners and pronouns. The third person singular pronouns must agree with their antecedent in number and gender. The number and gender of the subject pronoun are matched in subsequent pronoun selection:

- I/you/we/they hear BUT it/she/he hears.
- When the lady arrived, she/*he brought two pens with her/*him.
- When the storm raged through the city, it/*she/*he forced us to remain indoors.
- He introduced himself with reference to his earlier role at the hospital.

Concord with demonstrative, relative, interrogative and indefinite pronouns: Demonstrative pronouns (*this*, *that*, *these*, *those*) must agree with their antecedents in number. As determiners, the demonstrative pronouns must agree with the nouns they pre-modify. Relative pronouns/interrogative *wh*-pronouns are marked for gender as *who/whom* refers to a human or quasi-human antecedent and *which* refers to the nonhuman or neuter. As relative pronouns *who* and *which* are neutral in their grammatical number and the verb agreeing with them must take its number from the noun they refer to. Indefinite pronouns (*anybody*, *anyone*, *anything*, *something*, *someone*, *somebody*) and distributive pronouns (*everyone*, *everything*, *everybody*, *nobody*, *nothing*, *no one*) are fooled by singular verb in formal agreement with the singular form of their second component (agreement in number), though the third person plural pronoun or determiner are found with them. Indefinite pronouns like *any* and *none* as head of a noun phrase can be found with singular or plural agreement:

- I have taken this pen. This is very attractive.
- This pen is very attractive.
- These pens are very attractive.
- This is the man/woman who/*which did the work.
- This is the car which/*who is very attractive.
- It is I who am going to Digha.
- They talked to the person who was dishonest.
- They talked to the people who were good-looking.
- Everyone must respect their elders.
- Any of the persons is/are allowed to go.
- None of the persons is/are allowed to go.
- What/which pen is useful? [After what/which plus noun, the verb agrees with the noun.]
- What/which pens are useful?
- Which (of these sweaters) suits(sg) you best?---Ans: this one.
- Which (of these sweaters) suit(pl) you best?---Ans: these .
- No pupil has failed.(sg)
- No pupils have failed.(pl).

Concord with nouns having the same singular and plural form: There are nouns which have the same singular and plural form. They are *barracks, crossroads, headquarters, means, series, species, whereabouts, works*, etc. It is to be noted that *barracks, headquarters* and *works* can take a plural verb even when they refer to a single building or a single group of buildings (Eastwood).

- The company's headquarters was/were easy to find.
- The barracks is/are located just outside the town.
- An army barracks a large building or group of buildings for soldiers to live in.
- A chemical works causes a lot of pollution.
- Chemical works cause a lot of pollution.
- The firm's headquarters is/are in London.
- Headquarters in Dublin has/have agreed.
- The company's headquarters is/are in Amsterdam.
- I saw a headquarters at Barrackpore.
- The new comedy series has been a flop with the viewers.
- Bird species are numerous in this area.
- His whereabouts are/is still unknown.
- Trupin is thought to be in the Caribbean, although his exact whereabouts are/is a mystery.

Concord with nouns/nominals with some special quantifying expressions: If a noun /nominal is quantified by a numeral or *few*, the noun must be plural. They are *another, an additional, an extra, a further, a good, a happy*. According to Huddleston & Pullum, With singular heads, *a good* is restricted to occurrence with abstract nouns like *time, period, distance, way, stretch, weight*, and measure nouns like *day, hour, week* (For example , *We have a good stretch still to cover* or *It took me a good day to finish the assignment.*) Examples: *Another four boys, a further few nurses, * a further many nurses, a good three apples, an additional three months, an extra ten pounds, a good four hours, a happy fourteen minutes, a good few stories* :

- Another three bodies have/*has been discovered. [here *three bodies* is not a measure phrase.]
- Another three days are/is[sg/pl] going to be needed. [here *three days* is a measure phrase. Huddleston & Pullum, page 354]
- Another child/*children was found missing.
- Another four children were found missing. [another + numeral + plural noun]
- Just think, in another three months (= three months from now) it'll be summer again.
- It cost me £50 a day and a further £60 for insurance.
- If you have any further problems, let me know.
- Not only did I arrive at my conclusions after careful thought, I took a further step and tested them.
- Cook for a further 2 minutes.

- A further few/*many volunteers were needed.
- There are still a good empty seat.
- There are a good many people there.
- An additional five persons were permitted.
- A happy fourteen minutes have passed by.

There are certain plural measure phrases which are construed as singular: The nominals/noun phrases (in the examples below) are plural with respect to their internal form (they have plural nouns as head) but they are conceptualised as denoting single entities: a period of time, a sum of money, a distance, a stretch of music, a quantity. (Huddleston & Pullum, page 354)

- That ten days (=that period of ten days) we spent in Florida was[sg] fantastic. [period of time]
- That few /*many days we spent in Florida was[sg] fantastic.
- This twenty dollars(=this sum of twenty dollars) isn't[sg] going to get us very far.[sum of money]
- This next two miles isn't[sg] going to be difficult. [distance]
- This last fifty bars clearly isn't[sg] Beethoven. [stretch of music]
- That two pounds of sugar you bought isn't [sg]going to be enough. [quantity]
- This forty miles is a long distance. [a distance]
- That four days is fantastic. [a period of time]
- This twenty dollars is not sufficient. [a sum of money]
- This last fifty bars is not Beethoven [a stretch of music]
- That two pounds of sugar is not enough [a quantity]
- Three eggs is plenty[a quantity]

Compare:

- Those ten days(=*those periods of ten days) we spent in Florida were[pl] fantastic.
- These twenty dollars aren't[pl] going to get us very far.
- These next two miles aren't[pl] going to be difficult.
- These last fifty bars clearly aren't[pl] Beethoven.
- Those two pounds of sugar you bought aren't[pl] going to be enough.

With quantifiers that select singular heads, respecification is the only option. It is to be noted here that *each* and *every* are distributive determiners:

- Every ten days has[sg] been well.
- Each fifty bars has[sg] been a challenge.
- Every ten days we've spent on the project has[sg]/*have cost a fortune.
- Each fifty bars was[sg]/*were a new challenge

Compare:

- Forty miles is a long way to reach. [here the amount or quantity is treated as a whole, just like a period of four days, this sum of twenty dollars, etc.]
- Fourteen miles is further than you'd think once you start to run it.
- Four days is very fantastic.
- Twenty dollars is not sufficient.
- Last fifty bars is not Beethoven.
- Two pounds of sugar is not enough.

Concord of Pronominal adjectives with the collective: Pronouns should be consistent in number with the collective:

- The committee is discussing whether it should open its sessions to the public,
- The committee are discussing whether they should open their sessions to the public. [*It* suggests that the committee is being regarded as an impersonal unit, while *they* suggests that the emphasis is on the members of the committee as individuals. The choice between singular and plural verb is also associated with the choice between personal *who* and impersonal *which*: a family *who* are', a family *which* is.]

Concord with compound antecedent: A pronoun referring to a compound antecedent joined by *and* or by *both...and* is normally plural. Examples:

- Both Ram and Shyam are doing *their* duty.
- Ann and her friend said that *they* had been chased by a fierce dog.

But when the two parts of the compound statement name the same person, the pronoun is singular:

- My friend and fellow scoutmaster told me how *he* handled recalcitrant Scouts.

When the two parts of the compound antecedent name parts of a whole or two closely related things, a singular pronoun is sometimes used.

- Famine and disease overwhelmed the land, and nothing could be done about *it*. [Here the *it* might be thought of as standing for the preceding clause as a whole, rather than for the subjects of the clause]

When the antecedent is compounded with *not...but*, the pronoun agrees with the affirmative antecedent:

- Not Roger but his brothers offered *their* services.
- Not only the girls but also their mother had on *her* best clothes.

When the antecedent is compounded with *either ...or* or with *neither...nor*, the grammarian's rule is that the pronoun must be singular if the parts of the antecedent are singular. But if the two parts are of different numbers, theoretically the pronoun agrees with the nearer antecedent, but we try to avoid such constructions:

- Either the headmaster or the clerk has *his* office in the building.
- Either the rich persons or the clerk has done *his* duty.
- Either the clerk or the rich persons have done *their* duty.

Concord between pronoun and antecedent: The rule is that when the pronoun stands for a singular indefinite pronoun or adjective (e.g. *everybody*, *anyone*, *each*, *every*, etc.), the singular is used:

- England expect s every person to discharge *his* duty.
- Everyone must do *his* duty.
- Anyone who wants to shine in life must be attentive to *his* studies.

None takes a singular or plural pronoun, depending on the meaning or the whim of the speaker:

- None of them had their lesson prepared. [P. Roberts]
- None of them had his face washed.
- None of the ground has clay in it.

A pronoun referring to a collective noun is usually singular, as is a verb following such a noun. But when the idea of plurality is uppermost, a plural pronoun is used. According to Roberts, when the verb in such a sentence is one that distinguishes singular and plural, we have triple harmony, between subject, verb, and the antecedent. If the verb is singular, the pronoun will be singular, and if the verb is plural, the pronoun will be plural :

- The family always works out *its* problems by *itself*.
- The jury announced that *it* could not reach a verdict.
- The family tried their best to stay out of the crisis.
- The team was told *it* was in for a rough game.

- *The team was told they were in for a rough game---Incorrect
- *The team were told it was in for a rough game---Incorrect
- The team were told to hand in their suits.

But occasionally, the writer changes number in mid-sentences:

- The Administration opposes[sg] this, arguing that *it* interferes with *their* commitments to the British and French (Dorothy Thompson, *Mercury*)

When the antecedent of the pronoun is singular in form but is used to denote a whole class, the pronoun is usually singular. We find exceptions to this:

- An owl likes to do *its* flying at night.
- A simple dinosaur bone may weigh 200 to 300 pounds, and a stone block full of *them*, a ton or more. (Kobler, *Saturday Evening*)
- A sincere Communist ---and of the burning sincerity of most of *them* there can be no question---believes...(Arthur Lovejoy, *American Scholar*)

It is to be noted that the pronouns *who*, *which* and *that* do not have forms which distinguish number, but when they function as subject, their number is indicated by the following verb. A relative pronoun agrees in number with its antecedent. If the antecedent is singular, the relative pronoun is followed by a singular verb. If the antecedent is plural, the relative pronoun is followed by a plural verb.

- This is the man who lives in Kolkata.
- He is a man who lives in Kolkata.
- They are those people who live in Kolkata.
- He is one of the men who *have* made the country what it is.[here the antecedent is the object of the preposition]
- It is one of the many roads that lead[pl] to Rome.
- Of the men who *have* made the country what it is, he is one.[the sentence transposed]
- Of the many roads that lead[pl] to Rome, it is one [sentence transposed]
- He is one of the men who has made the country what it is.[When *one* is uppermost in the mind of the speaker or writer , and the relative is made to agree with it.]

The rule is that the relative must agree in person with its antecedent and is followed by an appropriate form of the verb:

- I who am your friend will help you.
- You who are my friend must get help from me.
- He who is most to blame will be punished.
- It is me who is your friend.

When the adjectives stand before *kind* or *sort* modified by a prepositional phrase, there is a very strong tendency to make the adjective agree with the noun in the prepositional phrase:

- These sort[sg] of apples.
- Those sort [sg]of people.

The rule is that the pronoun must agree with its antecedent in gender as well as in person and in number:

- Every person in the convent had devoted *herself* to God.
- Everybody in Harvard University (man's school) knows *his* English.
- Everybody in Stanford University (coeducational school) knows *his* English grammar.
- Everybody in smith college (woman's school) knows *her* English grammar.

Concord with *the greater/the greatest part of*: Both singular and plural concord are found in these syntactic constructions.

- The greater /greatest part of the farmland is fertile.
- The greater /greatest part of the students are absent.
- The Kralj home, where the greater part of the action takes place, is stunning.
- And for many, the best part of the day is watching not one, not two, but three football games, back to back.
- The filtered beer is tank conditioned, but the greater part of output has a secondary fermentation in the bottle.

Concord with the expression *so many pounds' worth of*: with this expression, we must pay heed to the context and idea expressed. If we add much importance to the plural noun which follows the expression, it takes plural concord. If we want to add much importance to the value, the verb is singular.

- Nearly a thousand pounds' worth of books were destroyed. [here we think of the books, not the worth of them, being destroyed.]
- There is nearly a thousand pounds' worth of books in the library. [here we only think of the value of the books.]

Concord with *wh-words in interrogative sentences*: In a *who/what* question, if the answer is the subject of a clause, the verb with *who/what* is usually singular, even when the answer is plural...Swan.:

- Who is going with you? -----Ans. Rina, Priya, and Tina
- Who are going with you?
- Who was/were at the party?
- What lives/*live in the rock holes?
- What is politics?[politics is general]
- What are your politics?[specific]
- What colour are your shirts?
- What colour is your pen?

Concord with some inverted syntactic constructions: There are a few comparative constructions introduced by *as* or *than* where the normal subject-verb order is inverted. The subject determines whether it takes plural or singular concord:

- As was the case .
- As was our intention
- As were our intentions
- Than were the effects
- There were more people present than were[pl] expected.[...than there were people expected]
- There were more people present than was[sg] expected.[...than it was expected there would be]
- There were more casualties than was[sg] reported.[...than it was reported there were]

Concord with mathematical calculations: In sentences expressing mathematical calculations we find both singular and plural concord:

- Two and two is/are[sg/pl] four. (2+2=4)
- Two plus two equals/is[sg] four. (--do--)
- Four from seven is/leaves[sg] three. (7- 4=3)
- Seven take away four is/leaves[sg] three. (--do--)
- Seven minus four is/equals[sg] three. (--do--)
- Three fours are[pl] twelve. (3 x 4=12)
- Three times four is[sg] twelve. (--do--)
- Three multiplied by four is/equals[sg] twelve. (--do--)
- Three/threes into nine goes[sg] three (times)[9 ÷ 3=3]

- Nine divided by three equals/is[sg] three. [--do--]
- One in/out of three new cars break/breaks down in the first year.[sg/pl]....Swan.
- A third of the students are/*is from abroad.
- Ten hundreds make[pl] a thousand.

Concord with measure phrases: In measures phrases, we find *dozens, scores, tens, hundreds, thousands, millions, billions, zillions, trillions*.

- Two tons of songs
- Dozens of apples/*dozens apples [head noun + complement]
- A/one dozen apples [determiner + head noun]
- A/one dozen of the apples/*apples[head noun + definite noun phrase]
- Two dozen apples
- Two dozen of the apples/*apples.
- Hundreds of voters
- Four hundred voters
- Four hundred of *voters/these voters
- Hundreds of voters/*the voters
- Many thousands of stars/*ten thousands of stars/*seven thousand millions of stars
- Several hundred/thousand of them
- A few million of us.
- Four thousand stars
- Fours of thousands of stars
- Four thousand of the stars
- Ten thousand of the stars
- Tens of thousands of stars
- Thousands of millions of stars
- The thousands of stars you can see
- Those millions of people living in abject poverty.
- Tens of thousands of these instruments [we say a, one, two, etc. thousand without a final 's' on 'thousand'. Thousands (of...) can be used if there is no number or quantity before it. Always use a plural verb with thousand or thousands, except when an amount of money is mentioned Four thousand (people) are expected to attend. • Two thousand (pounds) was withdrawn from the account.]
- One hundred (of the children) have already been placed with foster families.
- There were just a hundred of them there.
- This vase is worth several hundred dollars.
- Hundreds of thousands of people are at risk.[You say a, one, two, several, etc. hundred without a final 's' on 'hundred'. Hundreds (of...) can be used if there is no number or quantity before it. Always use a plural verb with hundred or hundreds, except when an amount of money is mentioned: Four hundred (people) are expected to attend. • Two hundred (pounds) was withdrawn from the account.]
- Three pounds of strawberry

Concord with how:

- how's things?
- How's mum and dad?
- A pair of dancers are/is dancing.

Concord with coordinated abstract nouns: In syntactic constructions containing coordination of abstract nouns we find both singular and plural concord:

- His kindness and bravery has/have been praised.
- His calmness and self-confidence is/are amazing.
- His kindness and his bravery have/*has been praised.[if the determiner is repeated ,the subject noun phrase takes plural concord.]

- Your laziness and your aptitude amaze/amazes all of us. [here the singular verb form shows that the laziness and ineptitude form a single cause of amazement while the plural verb form shows that each of them is a cause of amazement.]
- Good and bad taste are inculcated by example[good taste is...and bad taste is

Concord with *rather than, after, along with* : In these constructions the first constituent determines the number of the verb:

- The person together with his advisors, has ordered me to get out of the house.[formal agreement]
- The person together with his advisors, have ordered me to get out of the house.[notional concord—correct only in speech]
- One speaker after another was not present there.
- A teacher, and sometimes an artist has gone out to attend the meeting.[If an adverbial is attached to a second noun phrase linked to the first noun phrase by *and*, the construction is considered parenthetical and grammatical concord similarly requires the verb to agree in number with the first noun phrase----Greenbaum]
- The person, not the minister, has decided to go.[the rule is applicable even when the second noun phrase is negative , whether or not linked by *and*. The principle of notional concord prompts the use of singular concord]
- The person, and not the minister, has decided to go.

Concord with *not only...but/but also, not just...but also & not merely...but also* : When the subject noun phrases involving these coordinating correlatives are singular, singular concord is taken but when the noun phrases differ in number, the principle of proximity applies.

- Not only he but (also) his wife is present there.
- Not just he but also his wife is present there.
- Not merely he but also his wife is present there.
- Not just the people but also their coordinator is present here.

Concord with mixed expressions like *one or more, etc*: The mixed expressions one or two and between one and two obey the principle of proximity:

- One or two boys are present.
- One or more boys are present.
- One and half years have passed by.[here the head noun is plural :principle of proximity: *one* and a fraction or percentage takes plural concord as the notion of plural applies not to at least two but to more than one]
- A/one year and a half has passed by [here the head noun is singular: principle of proximity: here the noun phrase *a year and a half* is a conjoint noun phrase and is treated like a period of a year and a half]
- Hardly any of the books have been available. [pl]
- The two youngsters have turned up, and either is fit.
- The two youngsters have turned up, but neither is fit.
- Nobody, not even the rich persons was allowed. [=here *were* is found in casual speech, following the principle of proximity.]

Concord with nouns ending in *-s*: The following nouns take plural concord: *accommodations, alms, amends, annals, archives, apologies, arms*(=weapons), *arrears, ashes, auspices, banns, beginnings*(=the first or early ideas, signs or stages of something), *belongings, brains, bowels, catacombs, clothes, clubs, the Commons/Lords, communications, compliments, condolences, congratulations, contents*(=what is inside it), *covers*(=the sheets, blankets, etc. on a bed), *credentials, customs*(=where goods are checked), *damages, deserts, dishes* (=the plates, bowls, cups, etc. that have been used for a meal and need to be washed), *dregs, dues, entrails, earnings, elders, eyedrops, fireworks, folks, funds, furnishings, genitals, goings-on, goods, grassroots, greens, groceries* (=food and other goods sold by a grocer or at a supermarket), *grounds, guts, heads, heavens*(=the sky), *holidays, honours, humanities, intestines, left-overs, letters, lodgings, looks*(=appearance), *mains, makings, manners, means, minutes, munitions, odds*(=probability), *odds-and-*

ends, outskirts, pains, particulars(=details), premises(=building), proceeds, proceedings, quarters, reams, regards(=good wishes), refreshments, relations, remains(=what is left), remembrances, reparations, reprisals, returns, riches, ruins(=the parts of a building that remain after it has been destroyed or severely damaged), savings(=money saved in a bank, etc.), sciences, spirits, spoils, stairs, steppes, supplies, surroundings(=what is around you), tails, thanks, troops(=soldiers), tropics, valuables, wages, wits, woods, writings, etc.

- All his goods were packed into a neat checked carrier bag.
- Mr. Sen is a man of letters.
- People should pay according to their means.[when the term *means* denotes 'a way to an end', it can take either a singular verb or a plural verb. But when it means 'money or material possessions' it is always plural.]
- They are using peaceful means to achieve their aims.
- We will use every possible means to achieve our objective.
- My spirits(=mood) have sunk at the prospect of starting all over again.
- I don't drink whisky or brandy or any other spirits(=alcohol).
- A standard measure of spirits is 25ml.
- Kate paused and gathered her wits (= ability to think quickly and clearly and to make good decisions)
- the school/summer/Christmas holidays[pl] BUT : She spent her holiday[sg] decorating the flat.
- The centre is now closed for the Christmas holidays[pl].
- The Middle Ages/*age.
- He tipped the contents(= the things that are contained in something)of the bag onto the table.
- She picked up the glass and drank the contents(=the things that are contained in something).
- a table of contents (= the list at the front of a book)
- a contents (=the different sections that are contained in a book)page.
- Her poetry has a good deal of political content(=subject matter).
- Your tone of voice is as important as the content(=subject matter) of what you have to say.
- The content(=subject matter) of the course depends on what the students would like to study.

Concord in certain phrases: *as regards, as concerns, as follows*

- The main points are as follows.
- There were lengthy debates as concerns the financial provisions of the budget.
- As regards your questions, they simply remained silent.

[N.B.: *As follows* is an invariable idiomatic expression and does not change to *as follow* even when it refers to a word (or words) in the plural: The articles of the box are as follows.[here *follows* is impersonal]

- The undersigned(Ratan) requests[sg] the pleasure of your company today at 11 am.
Ratan
- The undersigned (Ratan & Sunil) requests[sg] the pleasure of your company today at 11 am
Ratan & Sunil]

Concord with *nothing /none but*: Nothing means 'not a single thing', or 'not a single part of something'. We can use *nothing but* in front of a noun, an infinitive without 'to', or an '-ing' form to mean 'only'. *But* (=except) as a preposition is used only after words like *no, all, nobody, anywhere, everything* or after question words like *who?, where?* and *what?* .In other words, *but* is used after *every, any, no* (and their compounds like *everywhere, anything, nobody*), *all, none*. The expression *nothing but* is an adverb. *But* is used as a preposition: *nobody but him; all of us but her*. Some writers prefer, however, to use *he* and *I* when a verb follows if the pronoun may be felt to be the subject. Subject pronouns are also possible: *Nobody but I can tell the difference; Nobody but me knew the answer*. According to Sinclair (212), *nothing, no one, none, nobody* and *nowhere* can be followed by *but* to mean *only*. According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, *none* is most often treated as plural in its use in sentences such as *None but his most loyal supporters believe (not believes) his story*. According to Rowe & Webb (p.174), *none* (=no one) is properly only singular: *None but the brave deserves[sg] the fair*. But *none* is now usually plural with *no one* for its singular: *All were saved; There are none missing. All were saved; There is no one missing*. According to the Oxford Dictionary

of Current English by Della Thompson (page 603, 1993), none followed by of can mean not any of or not any one of and the verb can be singular or plural according to meaning: None of this concerns me . None of them have found it. According to Della Thompson (p 603), none can mean no persons[pl] (e.g. None[pl] but fools believe[pl] it) or no person[sg] (e.g. None[sg] but a fool believes[sg] it). We know that none but and nothing but are idioms in English meaning only. When used in this sense, there is no question of agreement with none/nothing

- Almost none of the officials were (not was) interviewed by the committee. [When none is modified by almost, however, it is difficult to avoid treating the word as a plural.]
- None but the leaders are[pl] responsible for this.[here none is the subject which is plural and but is a preposition]
- None but the brave deserve[pl] the fair.
- None but the brave deserves[sg] the fair...Dryden [Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary/OALD---A.P. Cowie, p 838]
- None but(=only) the best is[sg] good enough for my child.[OALD,p 838: here none but is an idiom operating as an adverb and the best is the singular subject and the verb is singular.]
- None but Radford were[pl] present there.
- None but(=only) Radford was present there.
- Nothing but roses meets[sg] (not meet[pl]) the eye. [here nothing is the subject which is singular and but is a preposition]
- Nothing but wailings was heard.
- Nothing but the freshest vegetables are[pl] used in our restaurant.
- Jane drinks nothing but milk.
- Dave buys nothing but expensive clothes.
- The story was nothing but (= only) lies.
- The real crimes were on the other side, as nothing happens[sg] to them.
- There was nothing in his bedroom but a bed and an armchair and me.
- There is nothing wrong with the car.
- All it took was a word here, a word there, to convince him that he was a nothing.
- There was nothing but salad to eat.
- In the fridge there was nothing but a piece of cheese. (= In the fridge there was only a piece of cheese)
- Nothing but the freshest vegetables are[pl] used in our restaurant. [here *nothing but* is an idiom meaning *only*
- None but the best ingredients are used in our product. [pl]
- Everyone but Tina was told. [sg: here *everyone* is the subject and *but* is a preposition]]
- All but one were drowned. [pl: here *all* is the subject and *but* is a preposition]
- There is nothing but trees for mile after mile[sg]
- There is no one here but me[sg].
- All but the captain were rescued. [pl]
- None but the top-tier tickets remain[pl] for sale.
- [None is most often treated as plural in its use in sentences such as *None but his most loyal supporters believe (not believes) his story.*]
- None other than my favourite actor was cast in the lead role.
- Sometimes, for a couple of hours together, there were almost no houses; there were nothing but woods and rivers and lakes and horizons adorned with bright-looking mountains (Henry James, *The Europeans*)
- Of the models advertised, none *suits*[sg] me or none *suit*[pl] me.
- I hear a voice but none are there.... Tennyson.
- None of the machines still *works* as well as *it* used to.
- None of the men *has his* orders yet.
- None of the men *have their* orders yet.
- Trouble is near and there is none to help.[sg]
- None come to the appointed feasts.[pl]
- I asked each person, and none was aware of the problem.[*None* may mean *not one*, emphasizing singularity.]

[N.B.: Now we highlight the meaning of *but*. According to William Morris & Mary Morris, when *but* is used in the sense of *except*, it may function as a preposition or conjunction depending on the context. When it falls near the end of a sentence and is followed by a personal pronoun, it should be construed as a preposition and followed by the objective case: *Nobody was left in the parking lot but me*. When it is a part of a compound subject, it is construed as a conjunction and is followed by a pronoun form in the nominative case: *Nobody but I was left in the parking lot*. In the sentence *No one but I has read it*, *but* is a conjunction in the sentence, coordinating the two parallel subjects of *read* ("no one" and the speaker), and thus should be followed by the subjective form *I* and the sentence means *No one has read it but I have read it*. We also find *No one but me has left*, where *but* is a preposition.

A large majority of the Usage Panel agreed with this analysis in our 2016 survey; only 46 percent accepted *No one has read it but I* and only 36 accepted *No one but I has read it*, whereas at least 92 percent accepted the same sentences with *me*. "(American Heritage dictionary)

[N.B.: None meaning not any applies to three or more people or things, not to two. The phrase "none of the three cats" is right but "none of the two cats" is wrong.]

[N.B.: According to the traditional rule, nothing should always be treated as a singular, even when followed by an exception phrase containing a plural noun: *Nothing except your fears stands (not stand) in your way*. *Nothing but roses meets (not meet) the eye*. But there are certain contexts in which nothing but sounds quite natural with a plural verb and should not be considered inappropriate. In these sentences, constructions like nothing but function much like an adverb meaning "only," in a pattern similar to one seen in none but: "Sometimes, for a couple of hours together, there were almost no houses; there were nothing but woods and rivers and lakes and horizons adorned with bright-looking mountains" (Henry James). Note that the construction is sometimes used in the predicate following a form of the verb *be* to emphasize equivalence with the subject, even when plural: "Years of selective breeding have produced turkeys that are nothing but cooking pouches with legs" (Garrison Keillor). Nonetheless, the prevailing pattern is for nothing but and similar constructions to get singular verbs, even when emphasizing plural entities: *In their place is nothing but trees and mud, water and sky* (Sy Montgomery, *Spell of the Tiger*) *As far as I can see there is nothing but bushes and weeds, some as tall as my waist*]

Concord in interrogative sentences: According to American Heritage Dictionary, when all the elements in a series connected by *or* are singular, the verb they govern is singular: *Tom or Jack is coming*. *Beer, ale, or wine is included in the charge*. When all the elements are plural, the verb is plural. When the elements do not agree in number, some grammarians have suggested that the verb should agree in number with the nearest element: *Tom or his sisters are coming*. *The girls or their brother is coming*. *Cold symptoms or headache is the usual first sign*. Other grammarians, however, have argued that such constructions are inherently illogical and that the only solution is to revise the sentence to avoid the problem of agreement: *Either Tom is coming or his sisters are*. The usual first sign may be either cold symptoms or a headache.

- Are either my brothers or my father responsible? [pl: *my brothers*: proximity agreement]
- Is either my father or my brothers responsible? [sg: *my father*: proximity agreement]
- Is Amal or his friends going to New Delhi? [sg: *Amal*: proximity agreement]
- Are Amal's friends or Amal himself going to New Delhi? [proximity agreement]
- Has neither Amal nor his friends gone to Delhi? [proximity agreement]
- Have neither Amal's friends nor Amal gone to Delhi? [proximity agreement]
- Are you or he honest?
- Is he or you honest?
- Aren't I or he honest ?
- Isn't he or I honest?

Concord with *And/or*: It is a coordinating conjunction or coordinator. The phrase *x and/ or y* means *x or y* or both.

This conjunction indicates an option or possibility of both things listed ("*and*") or either thing listed ("*or*"). *The crime is punishable by a fine and /or prison term* means the guilty party may be given a fine, sentenced to prison or both.

Many people think that *and/or* is only acceptable in legal and commercial contexts. In other contexts, it is better to use *or both*: *some alcoholics lose their jobs or their driving licences or both* (not *their jobs and/or their driving licences*)

- It is important to establish that the increase in profit and/or sales (=the increase in profit only, sales only, or in profit and sales combined) is[sg] maintained.
- A fine and /or prison term are to be meted out to the convict.
- All dwellings and/or other structures on the property are included in the contract.
- A house and/or a flat were bought by the owner.
- Two houses and/or a flat were bought by the owner.
- A house and/or two flats were bought by the owner.

Concord with determinative: The term determinative is a” member of a mainly closed class of words that typically precede nouns (or, strictly speaking, noun phrase heads) and limit their meaning in some way. Determinatives in this sense mainly function as determiners in noun phrase structure. According to Quirk et al, the word class label is determiner and the function label is determinative. But according to Huddleston & Pullum, the nomenclature is reversed: the word class label is determinative, whereas the function label is determiner. The determinative must agree with the following subject in a clause. According to Huddleston & Pullum, there are only four items that belong in the pronoun and determinative categories. They are *what*, *which*, *we* and *you*.

- We British will support the issue. [*we* is the determinative and *British* is an adjective and this adjective operates as the head.]
- We will support the bill[pronoun]
- You Irish will have his support[determinative]
- You will have his support[pronoun]
- You children pay attention. [*you* is a determinative and *children* is the subject]
- We students must study hard. [determinative: here *we* is a determinative and *students* is the subject]
- We Americans are a sturdy lot.[here *we* is a determinative and *Americans* is the subject]
- We must study hard.[pronoun]
- You girls, stop talking.[here *you* is a determinative and *girls* is the subject in the vocative]
- You students must study hard.[determinative]

Concord with nominal adjectives: There is one type of adjective phrase consisting of the definite determiner and adjective. This is a nounless phrase. These are adjective-headed noun phrases. Here adjectives operate as the head of a noun phrase and can be modified by adverbs. These phrases refer to some groups of people in society. They take plural concord. These expressions are not many in English. For example, *the dead* means *the dead people* or *all dead people* (Swan, 188). These phrases are called *plural adjectival nouns*. (Oxford dictionary) or fused-modifier head constructions as noun phrase. These are generic. We also find non-generic cases. Examples:

Social/economic: the rich, the poor, the strong, the weak, the hungry, the privileged, the underprivileged, the disadvantaged, the intellectually gifted, the faithful, the educated, the jobless, the unemployed, the homeless, the real working poor, the workless, the hard-hearted, the wealthy, the wicked, the wounded, the accused (= the accused people), the wise.

Physical/health: the blind, the deaf, the insane, the deceased, the destitute, the dying, the sick, the mentally ill, the injured, the disabled, the healthy, the handicapped, the lazy, the lame, the fat, the indifferent, the leaning, the halt, the transient, the squeamish, the departed , the living, the dead

Age: the young, the very young, the aged, the young at heart, the elderly, the middle-aged, the elderly, the old

- The blind are rather unfortunate.
- The poor (=poor people in general) are happy indeed.
- The rich are not always happy.
- The old who resist change can expect violence.

- The wise look to the wiser for advice.
- We will nurse your sick and feed your hungry[pl]
- In the England of 1900, little was done to help the poor (=the poor people or poor people in the then time/in 1900, not all poor people)
- Not only in terms of dollars, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer in choosing schools.
- The rich(=those who are rich) cannot enter the gate of heaven.
- The unemployed are losing hope.
- The injured were taken to hospital.
- The dead have no further worries.
- This is the problem of the poor/* the poor's problem/poor people's problem.
- There are more unemployed than ever before. [here the determiner *more* is used instead of *the*]
- There are opportunities for both rich and poor [sometimes, adjectives without *the* are used in paired structures. If we mention two groups, we may omit *the*]
- The study compared the diets of rich and poor in a few nations. [without *the*]
- He is acceptable to both old and young.
- Five of the deceased/the departed [pl]were employed by the club.
- All the accused[pl] have pleaded guilty.
- There are 3 million unemployed/dead in this country. [here a number is put in front of the word.]

We also find non-generic uses of adjective-headed noun phrases. According to Swan, adjectives are used with *the* to refer to singular examples, choices, superlatives and, general abstract ideas(e.g. the unreal, the difficult, the impossible, the unknown, the mysterious, the unexplained, the absurd, the ordinary, the old, the new). If we refer to the quality of something rather than to the thing itself, we use *the* with the appropriate adjectives (the impossible, the possible, the old, the new). These expressions are singular.

- The new drives[sg] out the old.
- The *beautiful* is not always the same as the *good*. [abstract ideas]
- The accused [sg]was found innocent.[singular example]
- Susan and Greg are my friends. The latter is an eminent teacher. The former is a good doctor.[singular example]
- The undersigned has requested her to take a serious note of the expenses.[singular example]
- The deceased(the departed--SG) shot her mother before killing herself.[singular example]
- He is interested in the supernatural[abstract idea; the paranormal--singular]
- Successful golf requires luck, too, something to make you feel that the supernatural is on your side.[abstract idea]
- Have you got any pen? Do you want *white* or *red*?[choice]
- I have taken two large packets and one *small*. [choice]
- Wash the *reds* and *blues* separately.[colour adjectives can have a plural -s ending in the situation, effectively becoming nouns]
- The tallest in our family is my eldest brother.
- The cheapest which we bought was not liked by my mother.
- The latest (the latest news or thing) is that he is going to Delhi.
- The very best (the very best part or thing) is yet to come. [the unknown, the sublime, the extremely ridiculous]
- The evil (that which is evil)
- They are in mad search of the unobtainable (that which is unobtainable)

There are some adjectives of nationality which are used in the same way. Such expressions end in *-sh*, *-ch*, *-ss* or *-ese*. They are plural. Examples: the British, the Irish, the Welsh, the English, the Scotch, the Spanish, the Dutch, the French, the Japanese, the Lebanese, the Burmese, the Chinese, the Swiss, the Scottish (people of Scotland)

- The British (=all the British people/all British people) are very proud of their sense of humour.
- The British have a very odd sense of humour. [According to Oxford Dictionary, there is no singular noun which is commonly used to refer to a person from Britain. Instead the adjective British is used: The man is British. The noun Briton is used mainly in newspapers]
- The Japanese were looking round the cathedral.
- The Chinese welcome western tourists.
- The English are reserved.
- The Irish (who live) in America retains sentimental links with Ireland.
- The Polish who are very rebellious resisted strongly.

Concord with number-transparent nouns: The number-transparent nouns are *lot, plenty, lots, bags, heaps, loads, oodles, stacks, remainder, rest, number, couple*.

- A whole/huge lot of time has been wasted.
- A lot of our land is used to grow crops for export.
- A lot of the play is very funny.
- His friends are a strange lot.
- A hundred dollars was a lot of money in 1901.
- A lot of people were hurt.
- A lot of money was spent on it.
- Lots of people were hurt.
- Lots of money was spent on it.
- Don't grab at the balloons, children - there are plenty for everyone.
- 'Do we need more milk?' 'No, there is plenty in the fridge.'
- Don't worry there are plenty of options.
- There is plenty of milk in the room.
- Don't panic, there is bags of time yet.
- There are bags of odd jobs to do still.
- There was[sg] a heap of stones where the building used to be.
- Beneath were heaps of dry leaves, enough to cover many men.
- There's heaps of time before the plane leaves.
- There was an enormous heap of junk mail lying on the doormat when we got back.
- There were a load (a lot) of people there.
- The maximum load(amount of weight) for this elevator is eight persons.
- There were a load of people there.
- There is a load of rubbish there.
- There were loads of people there.
- There is loads of rubbish there.
- Oodles of money was inherited from her uncle.
- There were stacks of books on the bedside table and floor.
- There is a stack of unopened mail waiting for you at the house.
- Most of our employees work in New York; the remainder are in London.
- It rained the first day but the remainder of the trip was fine.
- The first question was difficult, but the rest were pretty easy.
- I've got two bright students, but the rest are average.
- I'll keep a third of the money and the rest is for you.
- If this number of people come[pl] next time we will bring in professional caterers. [number-transparent]
- BUT the number of protesters arrested has[sg] not been revealed. [number is not number-transparent.]
- The Thames has certain natural disadvantages as a shipbuilding centre: to these is/*are added an artificial disadvantage.
- There were a table and some chairs in there. [here the compound subject is compact and almost equivalent to *some articles of furniture*]
- There was/were a plain deal table in there and some wicker armchairs which they had produced from somewhere in the depths of the ship. [According to Fowler, *was* would be an improvement. First, the

author has made table and chairs less homogenous, less equivalent of some articles of furniture by describing one as *plain* and the others as *wicker*. Secondly, he put the long relative clause after *chairs* and not after *table*. Third, in order to cut off the relative clause from table he has placed *in there* after *table*. The verbal phrase is so arranged that it encloses one item of the compound subject and the other is left detached. Hence the second part of the clause is an elliptical one: *There were in there* is to be understood out of *There was in there*.]

- There is[sg] heaps of ammunition[sg].
- There are[pl] heaps of cups[pl]

Concord with words repeated and connected by *after*:

- Year after year has passed.
- Boat after boat is sailing by.
- One year after another(year) has flitted by.
- Letter after letter describes the scenic beauty of the Himalayas.

Concord with noun phrases with apposition: An appositive may be emphasized by such an introductory expression as *namely*, *specifically*, *or*, *that is*, *in other words*.

- I, Aditya, am a good doctor.
- You, girl, are very pretty.
- He, my teacher, is respected by all of us.
- She, his wife, has gone to her father's house.
- One of Hemingway's novels, *Across the River and into the Trees*, was a disappointment.
- The novel *Across the River and into the Trees* was a disappointment.
- One member of the clan---namely, Antonio---was given all the treasure and sent to Padua.
- The distance to be run---specifically, two miles and a half---is the oldest tradition of the race.
- The dental preterit---that is, a past tense in *d* or *t*---is a peculiarity of the Germanic languages.
- The periphrastic verb---in other words, a verb expressed in two or more words---is characteristic of modern English.
- The great auk or *plautus impennis*, is now extinct.

Concord with *need* & *dare*: *Dare* can be used as a main verb and a semi-modal verb. When used as a main verb, it means *to challenge*. As a main verb, it can also mean *to be brave enough or rude enough to do something*. With this meaning, it can be used as a main verb followed by a *to*-infinitive or an infinitive without *to*. As a semi-modal verb, it is followed by an infinitive without *to*. *Need* can be used as a main verb and a semi-modal verb. The semi-modal *need* has no past simple form. Instead, we use *didn't need to* or *didn't have to* when we express no obligation in the past:

- Some snakes can bite but I dare you to hold this big snake.
- If Sumi dares (to) go there again, she'll be in big trouble! [main verb]
- He doesn't dare (to) go there. [main verb]
- No one dares (to) go there. [main verb]
- No one dare go there. [semi-modal verb]
- Does anyone dare (to) go there? [main verb]
- Dare anyone go there? [semi-modal verb]
- Doesn't he dare (to) go there? [main verb]
- Daren't he go there? [semi-modal verb]
- Dare/*dares she tell him? [semi-modal verb: dares is never used in a question or in a negative statement. Instead, we use dare.]
- He dare/*dares not enter. [semi-modal verb]
- She dared not breathe a word of it to anybody.[semi-modal]
- They daren't ask for any more money.[semi-modal]
- I daren't look/* I daren't to look.[we must not use a *to*-infinitive with daren't]
- I don't dare tell my mom and dad.
- She was so high up now that she didn't dare look down.

- He didn't dare (to) say what he thought.
- I need to get some sleep.[main verb]
- He needs to win this game to stay in the match. .[main verb]
- You don't need to leave yet, do you? .[main verb]
- You need to know how toxic the product is. .[main verb]
- This shirt needs to be washed. [main verb]
- All you need to do is complete this form.[main verb]
- I needed to get some sleep.[main verb]
- I don't need to leave until 10.[main verb. It is to be noted that we use don't need to do something or (semi-modal) need not/needn't do something]
- You needn't apologize. [semi-modal verb]
- I didn't need to tell him who I was – he already knew. [main verb]
- We needn't have ordered so much food. [To talk about the past, use the perfect forms need have and needn't have with the past participle. It is used to say that something is or is not necessary]
- You needn't have waited for me. (You waited for me but it wasn't necessary.)
- You needn't have bought so much food. There are only three of us staying for the weekend. (You bought a lot of food but it wasn't necessary.)
- Aditya said, "Kaushiki need not go there."
- Aditya said that Kaushiki need/*needed not go there.
- Need it be so dark in here? (formal)
- You needn't mention this to your father.
- I need to have my hair cut/*I need have my hair cut.[The main verb *need* is followed by *to* when used with another verb.]
- Need we write this down?
- Do we need to write it down?

Concord and Subjective and objective forms of pronouns: The verb must agree with the subjective form of pronouns and with the objective forms of the pronoun:

- It is I who am to attend the meeting.
- It is I who love you/It is me who loves you.
- It is I she loves/it is me she loves.
- It is me who has done/is doing /*have the work.
- It is he who is to go there.
- Yes, it is she !/yes it's her!
- This is he!/these are they.
- This is him/these are them.
- The only one who objected was ?I/me.

Miscellaneous examples of Concord:

According to Carter, when *any* refers to an individual entity, it takes singular concord. But when it refers to either an individual or several individual entities, it takes plural concord:

- Any of us does[sg] not play football.
- Any of you want[pl] a ticket.
- There are more than one approaches[found in casual speech]
- More than oner approach was taken there.
- It is a good ten miles.
- She is a full four years.
- Not informing neighbours was a serious mistake.
- Cycling and walking are[pl] two physical exercises.
- The wages of sin is death.[death is the wages of sin]
- There is heaps to say.

- Taking exercise and eating healthy is[sg] good for health.[when the two coordinated terms represent a single idea, singular concord is correct]
- All coming and going was[sg] forbidden.
- Screaming and shouting was[sg] heard.
- The tumult and the shouting dies[sg].
- The room and the whole house was[sg] full of good stuff. [here the house and the room form a single entity since the room is part of the house.]
- This bomber and its cargo weighs [sg] over a hundred tons.[here something is predicated of two entities viewed as a unit]
- In addition, lack of good, affordable pre-school and out-of-school child care and responsibility for the care of elderly relatives and household chores means[sg] that part time work seems the only practical option. [Here singular concord is used because the circumstances referred to in the subject noun phrases are collectively said to have particular consequences.]
- The very large number of neurons and the multiplicity of possible connections among them means[sg] that the nervous pathways are extremely complicated. [Here singular concord is used because the circumstances referred to in the subject noun phrases are collectively said to have particular consequence.
- Four eggs[pl] is[sg] plenty.
- One student in a hundred takes[sg] exam.
- In a hundred students, only one takes[sg] exam.
- One in a hundred students take/takes[sg/pl] exam. [both singular and plural concord---here the head *students* is plural but the verb can be singular or plural: the singular is motivated by the presence of one and the synonymy with the two examples above.]
- In a hundred students, only one takes[sg] exam.
- The couple(=a man and woman who are married) is/are happy.[sg/pl]
- A couple(=a set of two) of my friends have/*has planned to visit it.[sg]
- The last couple of years have been difficult.
- An elderly couple live next door.
- An elderly couple was sitting on the park bench.
- A pair(=a thing made up of two parts) of trousers is very sharp.
- A pair of dancers(two people closely connected) is/are dancing.[sg/pl]
- The pair is/are going to India.[sg/pl]
- A pair is/are driving a carriage/[sg/pl]
- Killing and violence was[sg] against the moral law[the two words amount to a hendiadys meaning *violent killing*]
- Sunshine and showers are again forecast.[pl]
- There are[pl] introduced into the Shipyard agreement clauses[pl] which hold the balance equally.
- A book in which are[pl] discussed the pressing problems[pl] of home and foreign policy. [inversion]
- On these questions there are[pl] likely to be acute differences[pl] among the political groups and parties.
- Where only three years ago was[sg] pasture land now stand[pl] vast engineering shops, miles of railway sidings and the constant hum of machinery.

[N.B.: Difference between *couple* & *pair*: a pair is a set of two things usually used separately. These two things are not joined together e.g. *a pair of shoes*, etc. or something made in two parts e.g. *a pair of trousers*, *a pair of socks*, *a pair of scissors*, etc. Any two things of the same kind can be regarded as a couple e.g. a couple of pounds, a couple of days, etc.]

When the coordinated noun phrases are uneven in length or when the second noun phrase is a singular noun, a singular verb form seems appropriate.

- Bird songs[pl] and the sound[sg] of the waterfall makes it a magical place.

There are some coordinated noun phrases which are alternatives and they may take singular concord when disjunctive coordination is implied or meant. In disjunctive coordination, the selection of one coordinated noun phrase excludes the other coordinate noun phrase.

- A cup of coffee or a brisk walk is called for.
- A lot of questions were asked. [here *a lot of* is the determiner and *questions* is the head of the whole phrase]
- A book of answers was given. [here *book* is the head and is postmodified by *of answers*.]

If the noun phrase contains post-modification with plural nouns, it prompts plural concord, though the noun phrase is singular.

- Amid the crisis, the status[sg] of foreign nationals and aid-workers are[pl] uncertain.

Noun phrases which function as quantifiers can take singular concord or plural concord. Elsewhere when concord options are feasible, the singular concord invokes the set while plural concord suggests individual items. Both singular concord and plural concord are found with quantifiers such as *a group/set of* and *a range/series of*.

- A total of 50 cars was/were banked up behind it.
- A group of boys has/have committed these mistakes.
- Her social set loves/love to party.
- The jet set is/are getting ready to descend on the island.

When the second noun phrase is set off with dashes or parentheses, the first noun phrase determines the number of the verb.

- The boys----and their parents---are very fine.

One or more is a compound subject and its second element is plural and takes plural concord. *One* out of any plural number is still one and takes singular concord.

- One or more of them are[pl] coming tomorrow.
- One out of ten students was[sg] late.
- Thing after thing is[sg] very violent.
- One in three is[sg] not admitted.
- One of every five achieves[sg] a perfect score.
- Time and tide never comes back[sg]
- Honour and glory is not my demand.
- Life, time and money is short living.
- Rise and fall is a condition of life.
- Slow and steady wins the race[sg].
- Early to bed and early to rise makes[sg] a man healthy, wealthy and wise.
- Tea and toast is/are what I normally have for breakfast. [Chambers]
- Two and two makes/make four[Chambers]
- A poet and teacher (=one person) comes on the dais.
- Every man, every woman and every child is[sg] watching the game.
- Every man, woman and child is [sg]watching the game.
- No friend, no relative and no teacher comes[sg] forward to help the poor boy.
- More than one boy is allowed to join the party.
- More than two boys are allowed to join the party.
- Our wages are[pl] not handsome. BUT The wages of sin is[sg] death.
- Part of the novel is very interesting.
- Part of the accusations are just.
- A quarter of it is rotten.
- A quarter of them are good.
- Two thirds of the document is false.
- Two thirds of the apples are good.
- Ten per cent of the amount has been spent.

- Ten per cent of the boys have failed.
- What percentage of the population is/are overweight? [*population* is a collective noun]
- A high percentage of the female staff are part-time workers.
- What percentage of women own a car?
- The percentage of live births continues to increase.
- A high percentage of their customers order their goods online.
- The percentage of school leavers that go to university is about five per cent.
- A high percentage of the coffee they produce goes to the US.
- The percentage of patients with normal mucosa was significantly less in the alcoholic group compared with the normal groups.
- The percentage of pensioners living below the poverty line has increased by 15% in the last four years.
- The percentage of women students at the university has increased steadily.
- This percentage is based on price changes during the last 30 days.
- Four kilos of coffee costs[sg] three thousand rupees.
- There's two boys outside to see you –According to Ronald Wardhaugh(RW), those who use utterances of this kind regard there as the subject of the verb for the purpose of subject-verb agreement.
- Between Friends is a coffee table book.(RW)
- Three quarters of the liquid is red.(R W)
- Three quarters of the cookies are ready.(RW)
- Neither is ready yet.(RW)
- More than one piece was broken in the move.(RW)
- Her courage and fortitude was/were impressive.(RW)
- The employees were each given a bonus at the end of the year for increased productivity.
- It was the first time I'd had visitors since I'd moved to London.
- I had a certain amount of (= some) difficulty finding the house.
- We're going to the mountains (= an area where there are mountains) for our holiday.
- The view from the top of the mountain is breath-taking.
- Not a speck of talcum powder, not a smear of soap, was seen on any surface.
- a tiny strip of garden
- There was no trace of a smile on his face.
- There is no help for those with lots of luggage and/or small children.
- None except them were present at the meeting.

When the names of countries are plural, the verb is singular. Examples: *the United Nations, Naples Athens, Algiers, Wales* , etc.

- The United States of America is a rich country.
- The Netherlands is famous for milk products.

When the names of mountain ranges are used as subject, the verb is plural.

- The Himalayas are to the north of India.
- The Alps are in Europe.
- The Andes are very famous.

When *people, folk, gentry, vermin*, livestock (= farm animals), *wages, police* and *cattle* are used as subject, the verb takes plural concord. But *advice, apparatus, behaviour, dust, electricity, equipment, food, fruit, furniture, information, knowledge, luggage, music, nonsense, progress, scenery, traffic, weather, work*, etc are singular nouns. Plural nouns are placed after *many, both, several, a few, few, these those*. When all means *everything /the only thing*, it takes singular concord. *All* is used as a pronoun with the meaning 'everything' or 'the only thing'. It is often used like this in front of a relative clause. But when *All* is used as the subject of a sentence to refer to every person in a group, the plural verb is used. This is a rather formal use.

- So long as he's happy - that's all that matters.
- All I need is a roof over my head and a decent meal.
- All (of) this has to go out into the rubbish bin.
- All (of) the workers were given a pay-rise at the end of the year.
- All[pl] were happy with the outcome. (less formal: *Everyone was happy with the outcome.*)
- All[sg] is silent on the island now. (= a situation or to life in general)
- As you'll have read in our news pages, all[sg] has not been well of late. (=a situation or to life in general)
- I have just seen the boys. All are[pl] here now.
- I have examined the papers. All are[pl] correct.
- All her luggage was stolen[sg]
- All my furniture is brand new.[sg]
- All the apparatus was new.[sg]
- All his advice was very good.
- All the equipment has been old[sg]
- All this fruit has been rotten.[sg]
- All of my stuff was in order.[sg]
- The labourer's wages are Rs 800/ a day.[pl]
- The wages of sin is death.[sg]
- Five and five is/are ten[sg/pl]...Norman Lewis.
- It is the result of all that has[sg] happened.
- All I did was[sg] wash the little girl's ears.
- All I have got is[sg] a number.
- All were[pl] sitting as before.
- All were[pl] agreed that the consensus had broken down.
- All the children are not noisy.
- None of the children are noisy (=Not one of the children is noisy)
- Not all of the children are noisy (=Some of the children are not noisy)
- One/a or two hundred boys were present in the class. [pl]
- One or two friends are coming.
- About a million tons of lava are pouring every day from the fissure which opened on the Sicilian volcano in December.
- Three dozen of these oranges. [zero plural] BUT dozens of oranges.
- Five hundred[sg] of these books BUT hundreds of books/*these books.
- Nine ton/tons[sg/pl] of coal
- A few head/*heads of cattle/200 head of sheep.
- Four yoke/*yokes of oxen
- Six foot four BUT six feet
- The door weighed 3 tons.
- The river can receive vessels of up to 600 tons.
- The Department of Education say/says that they have/it has no comment to make. [Sylvia Chalker, page 33]
- Arsenal is/are playing well this season. Sylvia Chalker, page 33]
- Macmillan has/have made a goods profit this year. Sylvia Chalker, page 33]
- The Netherlands have/has a monarchy. Sylvia Chalker, page 33]
- The Seychelles lie in the middle of the Indian Ocean. [The rule is that the name of an island group usually takes a plural verb. ---Eastwood, p. 189]
- The Solomon Islands is/are[sg/pl] a nation-state. [we can use a singular or plural verb when talking about the group as a pollical unit.---Eastwood]
- These darts are quite heavy[here they refer to objects, not the game]
- Driving and drinking is[sg] the major cause of accidents.
- The bow and arrow is found in virtually every traditional culture.
- Bacon and eggs is still the standard American breakfast.[unitary compound: singular]
- His pride and joy was a restored Stanley Steamer.
- The enemy was advancing in full view of our troops.[sg]

- In twos and threes the enemy were creeping up the hill[pl]
- The Pipkin family is an odd lot[sg].
- The family were gathered around the table[pl].
- A hundred dollars a month is rather high rent[sg—here the subject is a number denoting a fixed quantity of something.].
- Three minutes was[sg] set as the length of each talk.
- A hundred and ninety-five was his best fighting weight.[sg]
- The first fifty were[pl] are the hardest.
- Those three minutes were[pl] the worst I ever spent[pl]
- Athletics is ruining American colleges.[sg] BUT: At the university of Whimblesey, athletics are pursued vigorously[pl]
- Physics makes much use of mathematics.[sg]
- So does statistics.[sg]
- Statistics often lie[pl].
- The politics involved were on a rather low plane[pl]
- Thunder and lightning always scares[sg] my dog to death.
- What we see and what we get are not always the same thing.[pl]
- Twenty dollars seems a ridiculous amount to pay to go to the movies.[sg]
- Five miles is rather more than I want to walk this afternoon[sg].
- Three eggs is plenty.[sg]
- Which(of these) is/are yours?[sg/pl][here we find a presupposition. The answer is presupposed to be singular or plural]
- What remains to be done?[sg]
- More members than one have protested against the proposal[pl]
- More than one member has protested against the bill[sg]
- *Porgy and Bess* has (the opera has) recently been revived on Broadway.[sg]
- *Lamb's Tales* was /were my first introduction to Shakespeare's plays[the general rule is that plural titles of collections of stories, poems, etc. may be viewed as either singular(collection) or plural(individual works).]
- *Children* is (the word is) an irregular plural.
- *My apologies* was (the expression was) all he could say.
- Not one has gone on strike.
- Dominoes is the only game I play at home'[Contrast *The dominoes are on the floor* (The individual pieces are).]
- What disturbs the council is the hostile attitude of many citizens towards the police (The thing that disturbs the council is)[sg]
- They live in what were once army barracks (in places that were once army barracks)[pl]
- What they do is no concern of mine (Anything they do is).
- Five miles was (That distance was) as far as they went that day[sg]
- Ten dollars is (That amount is) the price of the cheapest ticket'.[sg]
- Ten years is (That period is) the maximum sentence for that offence.[sg]
- Two hundred people was (That number was) all that the room could hold.[sg]
- Each of the persons has[sg] attended the meeting.
- Each of the persons have[pl] attended the meeting. [in colloquial English]
- They each have been given a pen.[the rule is that if *each* is placed after the plural subject, the verb is plural]
- My daughter is one of those students who like to study late at night (Some students like to study late at night and my daughter is one of them) [it is to noted that after expressions such as *one of those who* and *one of the few that*, choose the plural verb if the focus is on the group]
- My daughter is the only one of the students in her class who is likely to obtain a distinction in English Language (Only my daughter is likely to obtain a distinction in English Language)[Choose the singular if the focus is on the individual]
- We have not been able to persuade him to resign, which means (and that means) that we may have to face a court case.[*Which* sometimes refers back to more than one word or phrase; it is then always singular]
- The principal and Secretary of the school has[sg] distributed the prizes[same person]

- The principal and the Secretary of the school have[pl] distributed the prizes[not the same person]
- Not the Principal , but the two clerks have[pl] tried hard to establish the fact.[the rule is that if one of the two subjects placed after a negative word and the subject is placed after a positive word, the verb agrees with the subject placed after the positive word]
- The two clerks, but not the Principal , have tried to establish the fact.[the rule is that if one of the two subjects placed after a negative word and the subject is placed after a positive word, the verb agrees with the subject placed after the positive word]
- $(a + b)^3 = a^3 + b^3 + 3ab(a + b)$ is a formula in mathematics. [mathematical equations take singular concord]
- The available statistics show[pl] that our country is progressing rapidly.
- The acoustics of the auditorium are [pl]amazing.
- The economics of India are [pl]vibrant.
- Data about patients is only released with their permission. [it is to be noted that when data means facts or information, it is a plural noun. But when it means a body of facts, it is singular.]
- The data derived from this project has increased our knowledge of how genes work.
- There is no hard data to support these theories.
- These data were collected over a period of several months.
- There is very little reliable data available.
- The data was collected from 67 countries.
- All this data is stored on hundreds of servers in San Francisco.
- The data was/were collected by various researchers.
- Now the data is/are being transferred from magnetic tape to hard disk.
- What was once a cottage is now nothing but a heap of rubble.
- What were once beautiful houses are now nothing but heaps of rubble.
- Four months is not enough time[sg]
- Where is that forty rupees which I lent you ?[sg]
- One thousand and six hundred rupees was the doctor's fee.[sg]
- Five kilos of tea costs three hundred rupees.[sg]
- Five boring months have flitted by[pl]
- Four hundred rupees were spent on the car[pl].
- There were four hundred rupees in his purse.[pl]
- Four thousand dollars were distributed among the poor boys.[pl]
- He is a boy/*girl [concord of gender and person]
- They became friends/*a friend[subject -complement concord]
- The teacher thinks the boys the best students[concord between object and object complement]
- He is an administrator but she is an administratrix.[subject-complement concord of gender]
- He turned traitor/*a traitor.[when the noun is placed after the verb *turn* , it is singular and no article is placed before it]
- Seven days in Digha are/is[sg/pl] enough for us.
- Five tonnes of rice are /is not enough. [sg/pl]
- Four rupees buys me a cake.
- No girl and no boy is good. [singular: formal style: on *no* structures, prescriptive grammarians use singular agreement when both phrases are singular, but inn colloquial English we find plural agreement as well]
- No girl and no boy are[pl] allowed to leave school at lunchtime. [colloquial]
- No girl or no boy is[sg] good[formal]
- No girl or no boy are[pl] allowed to leave school at lunchtime[colloquial]
- No boy and girls have ever gone there[plural: according to Radford, if one or both of the conjuncts are plural, we use plural agreement]
- ...but none such has/have yet been reported[singular/plural: Quirk ,p 376]
- There aren't any who would disagree[plural]
- There are not many who would disagree[plural]
- There are one or more than one application for the post[plural]

- The order is/are committed to lives of prayer and service.[order =a group of people living in a religious community, especially monks or nuns]

Teaching implications: For developing writing skills, a good knowledge of different types of number agreement in English is essentially required. The students should be able to distinguish between different types of number agreement. The teacher would teach the students how to distinguish between different types of agreement/concord and how to use them in context or outside the context. The teacher would adopt the contextual approach. Through the appropriate communicative tasks and activities, the teacher would make clear the semantic differences between different types of concord and their appropriate use. The teacher would ask the students to identify different types of concord/agreement and explain their meaning and significance. The teacher would ask them to make meaningful sentences with appropriate subject-verb agreement.

Conclusion: For enhancing our communicative competence, we must have a mastery over different types of number agreement and their semantic differences. A good command over different types of number agreement is a must for all. By acquiring a good knowledge about different aspects of number agreement the students would be able to convey their desired or intended meaning effectively. In a nutshell, the realm of grammatical concord/agreement in English is very fascinating and is of wider significance.

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